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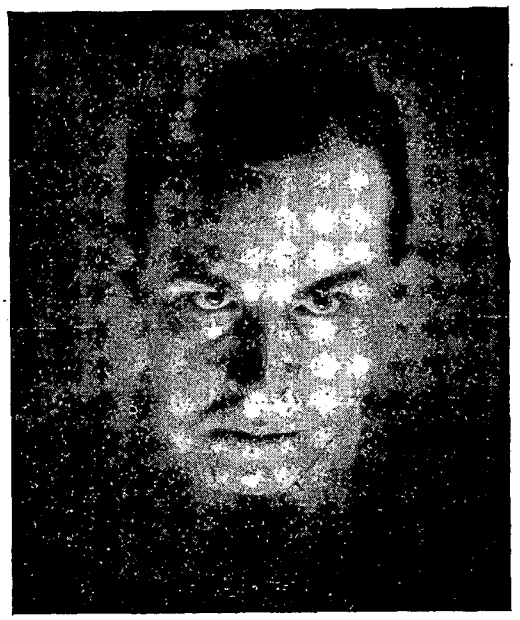

ERICH MARIA REMARQUE
whose book, "All Quiet on the Western Front" was the June choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

REMARQUE is a young German, whose family apparently were *emigrés* from France during the French Revolution. Hardly more than a schoolboy, with millions of other lads on both sides, he was plunged into the war on the Western front. His book, though in the form of fiction, is based largely upon his own experience. It created a true literary sensation in Germany (the American publishers of the book inform us that over 500,000 copies of the book have been sold there) followed lately by one in England. Most of the foreign commentators regard it, in the phrase of the never-intemperate *Manchester Guardian* as "surely the greatest of all war books." It was a unanimous choice, incidentally, of our own five judges.

In the long pre-publication report about this book, which appeared in the *Book-of-the-Month Club News*,—Remarque's book was described as a modern equivalent of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. "There is not a trace of nationalism in it," the report read, "nor of animosity toward an old enemy. To those who were in the war, as to those who were not, it bears the accent of simple truth that makes one exclaim with every page that is turned, as one German critic did, 'This, this, this is the War at last!'"

Without venom, with a frequent humor, but all the more impressively for these reasons, the book outlines the tragedy of an obliterated generation of lads, passing through a searing experience the like of which, probably, no other generation of boys has ever had in human history. And the high point of the book (most people will find it so, we believe) curiously has nothing to do with fighting, but with a poignant realization on the part of this normal young foot-soldier that all his roots with the familiar scenes and things, among which he had quietly grown, have been ruthlessly cut by his experiences. He comes to this realization during a first short leave at home, for which he had been craving with all his heart. He finds there that the truth about the war is so utterly beyond the conception of those whom he loved that he cannot even speak with them about it but must be silent or evasive. He has become of a race apart from his own people; the hated trench and No-Man's Land—and the book outlines simply and vividly what they connoted—have become his normal milieu. It is but a brief chapter, yet it is one which no one who reads will ever be likely to forget.

* * *

The Book-of-the-Month Club is the only organization of its kind which sends its subscribers pre-publication reports, such as the one quoted above, allowing them to take the "book-of-the-month" or not, as they wish. Subscribers may take as few as four books a year out of 250 to 300 recommended and reported upon by our judges. Over 100,000 judicious book-readers now subscribe to this service, *more than to all the other book-clubs in the United States combined*. If you are interested to know how it operates, and what it does for you, mail the coupon below for information. To those who subscribe now, the first book is being given free, provided it costs no more than $3.00.

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THE BOOKMAN

A DECADE OF AMERICAN FICTION *by* KENNETH BURKE

What novels and stories written in this decade will live? A sharp and judicious critic has here made his selection.

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The author of *Henry the Eighth* tells of his experiences on changing from critic and *causeur* to scholar and historian.

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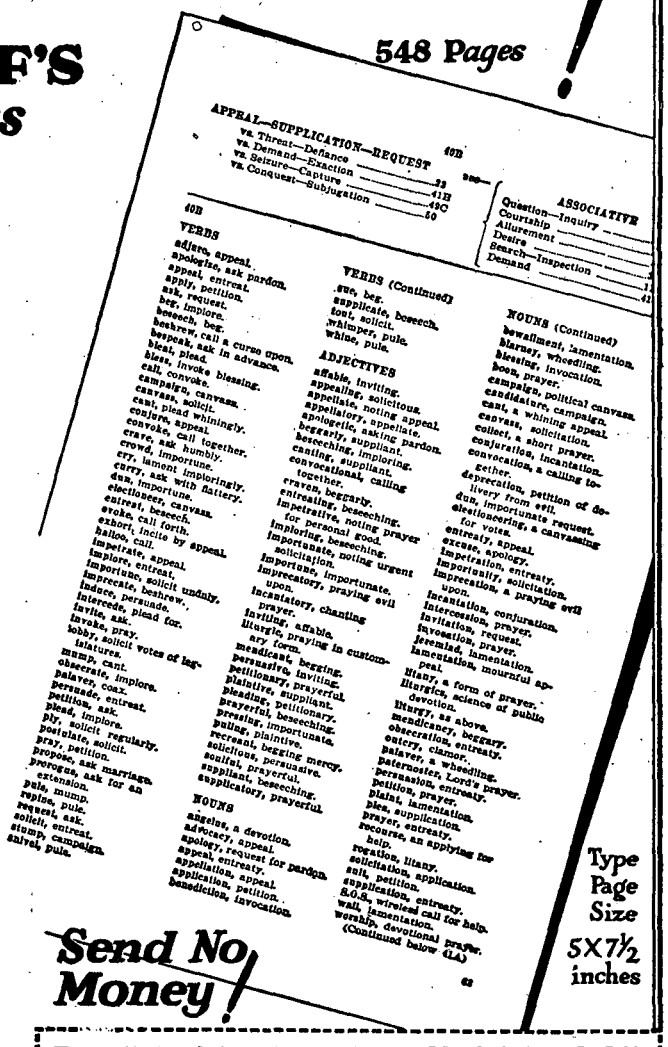

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS

Biography

MR. GAY *by Oscar Sherwin* (JOHN DAY. $2.50)

AS AUSTIN DOBSON once suggested, the Eighteenth Century in England is practically inexhaustible. Bales of records remain, and quantities of diaries, letters, and books. In them a constant and imaginative reader may discover innumerable events and characters. This life, moreover, being strangely like ours, becomes more comprehensible than perhaps any other period in English history. The men and women stand out clearly, so clearly that the mystery of Swift is a commonplace exception. Among the lesser men of letters none is simpler than John Gay, or more likable, or, at the same time, more picturesque, at least when superficially regarded. He was just made for a modern American popular biographer. Mr. Sherwin has unfortunately written the biography all in the present tense; and, while endeavoring to write with appropriate wit, he has ventured frequently into the company of quotations from the letters of Pope and Swift.

THE LIFE OF CHARLES M. DOUGHTY *by D. G. Hogarth* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $5.00)

THOUGH there have been neo-classical digressions in England (and there is one now) the main tradition in English literature has been romantic. This is the tradition of Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. Whatever classical scholars may think of its extravagances, it remains the most natural to English poets and has produced the best and most characteristic written works in English. Its relation to English character is proved not merely by Shakespeare's acknowledged position, but by the way in which he has dominated the imaginations of succeeding poets and readers. In this tradition Charles M. Doughty thought and wrote, even in his early journals; so that his carrying the *Canterbury Tales* with him in Arabia was less a technical choice than the following of a natural inclination. For the same reason, he disliked the weakness and dullness of Victorian English and spent most of his life "resisting to my power the decadence of the English language", which he found most agreeable in Spenser's *Faërie Queene*. Now, when many of the Victorians have begun to be forgotten or looked at coldly, Doughty on the contrary appears more and more to have gone a long way toward achieving his purpose, both in *Arabia Deserta* and in the epic, *The Dawn in Britain*. The first biography of him is, therefore, welcome, and all the more so because it is authoritative, full of information, temperate in its opinions and aware of the unity of his expedition into Arabia and his later poetical enterprise in England.

CAGLIOSTRO *by Johannes Von Guenther* (HARPERS. $3.50)

FEW men have engaged the interest of the world as did Cagliostro, the ugly, fat Sicilian boy, who rose from poverty to great riches, and travelled over Europe gathering vast audiences and making many disciples by his magnetic personality. From the present day viewpoint he was obviously a charlatan who employed whatever methods best suited his purposes, but despite his gross sensuality and questionable means of livelihood he remains forever a romantic figure—immortalized by Dumas in the character of Joseph Balsamo. Establishing his lodges of Egyptian Freemasonry in various European cities he rapidly became the dominant figure in that revolutionary organization. On the eve of his appointment to the post of Grand Master of the French lodges, he was betrayed by his wife to Marie Antoinette, and thrown into the Bastille, along with Cardinal Rohan, as the prime conspirator in the theft of the Queen's necklace. He was subsequently banished from France, and, no longer of use to the

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Freemasons, was hounded from one country to another until he met a tragic end at the hands of the Inquisition in Rome.

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The author shows his weaknesses and strength; and holds that behind his knavery there was the kindly motive of alleviating the suffering of the poor and needy, by bleeding the wealthy and credulous tyrants that governed the countries of his travels.

QUEEN LOUISE OF PRUSSIA *by Gertrude Aretz* (PUTNAM. $3.50)

Two circumstances, her own beauty and the admitted inferiority of her husband, are responsible for investing Queen Louise of Prussia with a historical significance. Even though she surpassed in courage and character the insignificant Frederick William III, her intelligence seems to have been considerably less than equal to the situations that she herself rashly contrived. Napoleon, it is true, said that the young Queen's *beaux yeux* came near winning political concessions from him, yet, as a matter of fact, he granted her nothing in the meeting which was the most important moment of her royal career. Fruitless as it was, that meeting was also probably not one jot more dramatic than this history indicates. The biographer, however, sacrifices nothing to drama and is, in fact, scrupulous in avoiding emphasis and fails to fuse her material into anything more than an honest, careful and rather prosy narrative so that the book is not likely to achieve an independent life of its own. Miss Ruth Putnam's translation is entirely praiseworthy.

COLLINS *by H. W. Garrod* (OXFORD. $2.00)

SPEAKING of Collins's *Ode Occasion'd by the Death of Mr. Thomson,* Mrs. Barbauld observed that contrary to the poem "the church of Richmond is not white, nor a spire, nor can it be seen from the river". With something of this

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literal-minded accuracy, Professor Garrod has almost built his analytical essay out of reservations to Swinburne's sonorous praise of Collins, particularly the praise of his "clarity of style". Such a scholarly performance requires patience in the reader as well as the commentator, yet with enough patience the reader can learn something new and interesting. Swinburne's enthusiasm certainly does need qualifying, and now and then Professor Garrod adds a sensitive discovery of his own. He likens the atmosphere of Collins's *Ode to Evening* to that of some of the gently mysterious evening landscapes of Ruysdael. He notes, in spite of some quibbling, how in this poem the lines,

> Or where the Beetle winds
> His small but sullen Horn,

only show their worth more fully when they are compared with the original fancy of Milton in *Lycidas*. Or he isolates simply and clearly by quotation the strangeness that he calls "the quality of *marvel*" in Collins's *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland*. The essay is, indeed, carefully considered, ably expressed and nicely printed; and it is likely to sharpen the interest and judgment of anyone who finds pleasure in the poetry of Collins.

Education

A SOCIAL INTERPRETATION OF EDUCATION *by Joseph K. Hart* (HOLT. $4.50)

THE thinking reader of Dr. Hart's book will find in it a stimulating discussion of the true nature of education. The individual, according to Dr. Hart, is educated by experience rather than by schooling. Many institutions and influences figure prominently in the ramifications of experience; no one of them—not even the school—is the dominating factor. The school, however, has a great deal to say about the formal training of the child. The new type of school may develop into an agency which will have for its function the coördination of those educative experiences which are now in the process of becoming disorganized because of our urban life. Dr. Hart holds the philosophy of the new school to be the freeing of the child from the shackles of the past so that it may grow to adulthood on its own account.

Dr. Hart dwells for a chapter or two on the need for school recognition of the child's hunger for dramatic, emotional experiences. He points out that such experiences are indispensable to the development of an integrated personality and ventures to prophesy that development of personality, rather than the accumulation of facts, will be the foundation of the school of the future.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF YOUTH *by Jessica G. Cosgrave* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

WRITTEN expressly for parents of such children as Mrs. Cosgrave has come to know in the Finch School, this book treats child problems in a popular style which suggests the magazine article. Its subdivisions take up questions such as "Tools for Right Living" and "How to Harness the Attention"; they discuss, among other things, "tough" and "tender" minds, reason as a solvent of domestic problems, memory training, the cultivation of popularity, and the laws of love. Mothers will be interested in the last two chapters, which discuss, first, the necessity for the child of engaging in self-expression and the method by which the parent should direct such expression, and second, the "Pattern of a Woman's Life"; it is contrasted with the pattern of a man's life in a thought-provoking manner.

CAMP AND CHARACTER *by Hedley S. Dimock and Charles E. Hendry* (ASSOCIATION PRESS. $3.00)

THE growth of the summer camp movement has long needed a book which would indicate the contributions made by these institutions to the development of the children who patronized them. This book, perhaps the first volume to treat camp activity from the educational point of view, seems to fill that need. Beginning with an analysis of the reasons advanced by children for attending summer camps and by parents for permitting their children to attend them, this book goes on to survey the types of boy behavior revealed by camp activities and the problems in character development which these behavior patterns indicate. It describes current

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camp projects and their purposes. By recording systematically the actions of youngsters engaged in project promotion, by testing them periodically (and in a non-academic manner) for the acquisition of knowledges, by discovering their mastery of camp skills and finally by discussing with them their ideals, the authors have managed to trace with considerable accuracy the development of the youngsters' characters during the camping period. Sample records and ratings and interesting case material make the authors' technique readily understandable. Their volume will appeal to all those who have ever gone to camp, who send their children to camp or who would like to know how to modernize camping procedure.

The Theatre

PLAYWRITING FOR PROFIT *by Arthur Edwin Krows* (LONGMANS, GREEN. $3.50)

FROM the consideration of every step of play construction, beginning with the inception of the idea, Mr. Krows has assembled a wealth of miscellaneous advice for playwrights, illustrating his points with citations of specific experiences in the theatre or, more graphically, at times, with reproductions of pages from the manuscripts of such men as Owen Davis and Eugene O'Neill. Mr. Krows has written methodically, with the expectation that readers of his volume will benefit from the method or lack of method, as the case may be, of playwrights whose practices he has studied. Details of the sale and production of the completed play are also described, along with the tempers and tastes not only of audiences but of managers.

THE ART OF PLAYWRITING (UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS. $2.00)

THE CONTENTS of the present book are the result of an experiment at the University of Pennsylvania in the teaching of the art of writing plays. The Mask and Wig Club, a campus organization, in collaboration with the faculty, invited five playwrights—Jesse Lynch Williams, Langdon Mitchell, Lord Dunsany, Gilbert Emery and Rachel Crothers—to the campus for a period of two weeks each, to address a group of students and advise them on writing for the theatre. In addition to a brief foreword, the volume contains only the formal addresses of the lecturers. With varying degrees of emphasis on idealism, as contrasted with a more direct approach to the technical questions of the stage, these five guests of the University proceed to aid as well as encourage new contributors to dramatic art. In each case the lecturer draws on his own experience, without attempting to conceal the fact that the road to successful production is a hard one.

THE ART OF PLAY PRODUCTION *by John Dolman, Jr.* (HARPERS. $3.50)

IN ADDITION to discussions of practical matters pertaining to casting, rehearsing and setting plays, Professor John Dolman, Jr., of the University of Pennsylvania, finds space for a good many words on the nature of esthetic stimulus and response in the theatre. Covering a large field of activity, the book may serve as a general introduction to the subject of play production. It is a book for the student, rather than the professional, but it is intended for men and women who expect to work in the theatre as members of a producing group. Professor Dolman emphasizes acting and directing, rather than play-mounting and stagecraft, both because he believes these phases of play production have been neglected by most theorists and practitioners and because in his opinion they are more important. The book is interestingly, though not extensively, illustrated.

THEATRON *by Clarence Stratton* (HENRY HOLT. $7.50)

CONCEIVED in no slight measure in protest against tendencies in the commercial or professional theatre, Clarence Stratton's volume offers a broad view of the accomplishments of the current little-theatre movement, not only with respect to general standards of art but to the details of lighting, scenic design, costuming and theatre structure. The breadth of view serves to emphasize a certain idealism, with which the author's impatience at the tendencies of the commercial theatre is balanced. Mr. Stratton sees

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in the little theatre a practical expression of discontent and at the same time a solution. He believes in the organization of audiences as well as in the organization of local repertory companies. The volume is rich in illustrations of sets and scenes from the more notable productions in little theatres in the several cities where the movement is flourishing.

THE WORLD TO PLAY WITH *by Ashley Dukes* (OXFORD. $2.50)

ASHLEY DUKES here offers lively but serious discussion on a number of questions which are closely interwoven with the theatre movement of today, whether in America or abroad. For example, one of his chapters takes the form of a dialogue between a theatre-goer and a film-goer, in which an opposition between exclusive art and popular art is exaggerated for the sake of argument. Contemporary interest in Congreve is analyzed in another chapter. Mr. Dukes is also interested in the differences between what he calls the photographer's theatre and the painter's theatre, a discussion which often centers around the question of the actor's makeup, whether it shall be realistic or symbolic, life-like or predicated on the mask. Mr. Dukes believes these two theatres may legitimately exist side by side. There is considerable significance in the fact that the book is dedicated to Edward Gordon Craig.

HOW TO WRITE A PLAY *by St. John Ervine* (MACMILLAN. $1.75)

A MODESTLY informal contribution to the subject of creative writing for the theatre. Its approach and style will make it of interest to teachers as well as playwrights, and particularly those playwrights to whom the play has not yet become an entirely natural form of composition and expression. The book is useful by reason of the thought processes and the self-examination it will induce in men and women who are prompted to turn a story into drama, whether they are old or new hands at the business. Modern tendencies in dialogue are examined and excerpts quoted. Perhaps Mr. Ervine's chief desire is to establish an understanding of the difference between dramatic form and all other

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forms, with the idea of helping the young playwright to see clearly in advance what he is attempting.

STAGE LIGHTING *by C. Harold Ridge* (HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $4.00)

THIS generously illustrated and carefully printed volume will be interesting, first of all, to the stage electrician, but only slightly less so to the director of plays and others who have a practical interest in the modern theatre. It is in reality a text book, one which is fairly abreast of the mechanical advance of the theatre of today. The author not only discusses the technique of theatre switchboard construction and the economical use of light values, but also broader problems of theatre construction and stage design. Problems involved in the presentation of certain plays and various kinds of plays are also described, from the point of view of the technician. Cost of layouts, principles of lighting and prospects for the future also are treated. The bulk of the illustrations consists of diagrams and technical plates, but several model designs for scenes are reproduced.

THE PROBLEM PLAY *by Ramsden Balmforth* (HOLT. $1.75)

IN GOING to the play Ramsden Balmforth is receptive, first of all, to the dramatic elements which may influence public morals and taste and, secondarily, to the values which constitute entertainment. A re-creation of the taste and appreciation of the ancient Greeks should be our goal, he believes. And in Mr. Balmforth's opinion, we are a long way from it. The capitalizing of the first letters of words representative of general ideas, such as *Reverence, Humility* and *Self-control,* and his use of the phrase, *Temple of Art,* in an abstract sense, show how lofty is Mr. Balmforth's attitude toward drama. The general purpose of the book is to trace the influence of the so-called problem play on the public mind. It is likewise hoped that it may have an influence on the study of drama in schools, colleges and dramatic societies. It discusses modern plays, by men like St. John Ervine, G. B. Shaw and John Galsworthy, as well as the plays of the ancient Greeks and of Shakespeare.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE XXII)

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THE BOOKMAN

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THE GEORGIAN NOVEL AND MR. ROBINSON

by Storm Jameson

A MAN attempting to survey the countryside of modern fiction finds himself confused less by the extraordinary complexity of the region than by the maps of previous explorers. I was foolish enough to consult two or three of these before I began my own adventure, with a result comparable only to the feelings of a respectable little man of quiet manners who, walking through his familiar suburb in the evening, is suddenly confronted by the beginnings of a maze labelled variously: *This way to the Bottomless Pit,* and—*To Parnassus,* and—*Danger: Libido Loose Here.* I will ask you, a little later, to glance at the Aids to Travellers supplied by one of these cartographers. But in the meantime I beg your indulgence while I try to make my own map of the district. It will be no less amateurish, and I hope no more arbitrary than the others, but at least I shall know my way about it and be able to point out to you what I take to be the pleasant walks and comfortable inns along the road.

The borders of the country we are trying to survey together are debatable and shift so often that only a committee of the League of Nations could grapple with them hopefully. You must not lose heart if a hill that you had always supposed to belong to the Edwardian region finds itself suddenly included in the very heart of the manufacturing district of modern fiction, or if you are invited to walk by a lake on the farther shore of which are strolling a number of old gentlemen who appear considerably more lively than the languid young persons actually at your elbow. I do not want, if it can be avoided, to speak of those figures who—to our great loss—know now what song the Syrens sang and what wind blows through the fields of amaranth—Joseph Conrad, Henry James, and one greater than either, Thomas Hardy, and one more lovable than any, Katherine Mansfield. Nor do I want us to notice Wells, Bennett or Galsworthy—except as half-legendary figures in a background which is all the more portentous because we are trying to keep our backs to it. No single work by any of these writers we are trying to get on terms with bulks so large as does *The Old Wives' Tale,* or the first three parts of *The*

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Forsyte Saga, or interprets in so assured a fashion the spirit of its age as *Tono Bungay,* or leaves us with so vivid a sense of having lived through a complete stratum of society as does *Kipps.*

We have been standing, until now, on the side of a hill that looks over the country we propose to visit, a safe enough position for nervous travellers, and before we abandon it, to plunge into the diversified scene below, I should like to suggest that we take with us that quiet and respectable little man whom we left, you will remember, gazing in dismay at the nightmare transformation of his suburb. If we have him with us we shall not go too wildly wrong or lose all touch with the world we have left, since the little man—his name is Robinson, by the way—though not dogmatic, and always willing to listen to such people as he imagines to be more expert than himself, does have his feet very squarely on the ground and knows himself to be, in an unassuming sort of way, intelligent. The streak of adventure in him that will make him a useful travelling companion you have already deduced from his name. His ancestry—rather remote now—is Swiss. He is a member, as he will tell us as we go along, of his local Literary Society.

A quite different person, whom we shall not invite to accompany us, since he clearly knows nothing whatever about the region we are exploring, wrote recently in the *New Statesman* of the "desert of post-war literature". This critic assuredly keeps his head buried in the sand of his own back garden. Nothing could be less like a desert than this teeming countryside in which we may meet casually Francis Brett Young, Walter de la Mare, Maurice Baring, James Joyce, Romer Wilson, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, Norman Douglas, C. E. Montague, R. H. Mottram, Stella Benson, Virginia Woolf, Hope Mirrlees, Rose Macaulay, Ford Madox Ford, T. F. Powys, E. M. Forster, Hugh S. Walpole, and a host of other men and women, some as old as and some younger than those whose names I have recalled to you, and all talented in a high degree. And here the first of the perplexities I foresaw is on us, straddling across the narrow way. How is it that at one and the same moment in space we meet Aldous Huxley and C. E. Montague, Virginia Woolf and Maurice Baring, as if the last-named of both these pairs were the same age as his companion, as if the two elder writers *belonged* with these younger ones rather than with those lowering figures whom we relegated to the background, and whose actual contemporaries they are? It is a perplexity on which I cannot now linger, except to throw out to you, by way of clue, the suggestion that people who exist together in the same moment in space need not therefore be existing together in the same moment in time; that there may be, in Maurice Baring and C. E. Montague, some spark, some spirit—of questioning, of wistfulness—some *longing,* estranging them from their contemporaries and grappling them to us.

Now it would be just as well—the suggestion, as you have guessed, comes from Mr. Robinson—if we were to set about our exploration with some sort of method. It would be small use, our going up to the first interesting stranger we meet and blurting out: "I say, what about your novels?" He would certainly be very cool with us, probably despise us for what we undoubtedly are: trippers. No: we must have credentials, we must look as though we meant business, might at any moment write a novel ourselves or (what will impress our interesting stranger more) criticize one. So let us sit down in the first café we find (we will suppose it is a fine warm day and the café tables are set out on the pavement, under an awning, where we can sip our coffee and stare at the passers-by), let us sit down, then, in this very pleasant place and determine among ourselves just exactly what we have come out to see.

The Novel, you answer. The Georgian novel in particular. Very well. But what is

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the Novel? Is it the plot? The characters? The pattern? Or all three? What, when you open a new novel, do you most hope to find there? A story? Good company? Or the careful unfolding of a pattern which uses both plot and character to further its own ultimate perfection? Our friend, Mr. Robinson, is in no doubt at all that the story is the one thing essential to a novel. "Give me a good story," he says humbly (being a *nice* fellow)—"and you need not bother with the frills." But when it is pointed out to him that the best story in the world would bore him if he were not interested in the people whose fortunes it concerns, he prepares to hedge a little. He says: "Very well, then—the story *and* the characters". Perhaps we had better leave him at that, for the moment, not despairing, however, of being able a little later to persuade him that neither story nor characters can show themselves at their best until they have been related to some idea, some philosophy of life, some *faith,* perhaps, which lies hidden in the writer's mind all the time he is writing. And which is the pattern. But we will follow his suggestion and examine, with the help of the living illustrations that come, as we sit here, under our eye, the separate parts that go to make up the novel, hoping that in doing so, we shall be preparing for ourselves a polite method of introduction to the whole.

The Story. We will go so far with little Mr. Robinson as to agree that the story is essential to a novel. It is indeed the backbone of the book. But those animals which are all spine are not the most pleasant of their kind. And a novel which is nothing but a story, a series of events following each other like the knobs on the spine, is a very crocodile of a book, and a dead crocodile at that. So that here we are back again, before we have properly started, at the old riddle of art *versus* nature. A story is nature. Events do-naturally-follow one on another in time. And when they are over, that is to say when they are dead, we can record them, make a story of them. But a novelist, if he wants to offer us a novel and not an inanimate chronicle, must *do* something to these relentless events. He must, by every means he has at command, heighten our interest in the characters of his story. So that we care intensely what happens to them. He must introduce delays, surprises, bewilderments. So that what we see is no longer an eternally fixed series of knobs but a living creature, possessed of free will, capable of suffering under circumstance, capable of resistance, of heroism, and—perhaps most significant trait of all—of laughter. This is art, the art of the efficient novelist. And if from the courage, the failure, and the tears of his characters, something emerges, some statement, some vision (let us say) of man in relation to man, or to Fate, or to God, that also is art, the art of the great novelist.

But I did not want to arrive at this stage yet. There is still something to say about the Story itself, and its fate at the hands of the novelists on whom we are keeping an eye. The Georgian novelist has less respect for the Story than Mr. Robinson really likes. He has indeed far less respect than his predecessors had. Compare, for example, with a novel by Mrs. Virginia Woolf any of the acknowledged masterpieces of novel writing. Compare *Mrs. Dalloway* with *David Copperfield*. The Victorian novelist begins the story of his hero with his birth (no: before it). He continues it, with every circumstance of humor, pathos and changed scene, through childhood, schooldays, youth and marriage, to the point where David's life may be supposed to have become static. When, that is, it ceases to be changeful and becomes a mere chronicle of little happenings, getting up in the morning, sitting down to work, dining, talking placidly with Agnes of the everyday things, his work, the children, friends, which now make up their life, supping, going to bed, sleeping. For Dickens the story of David is finished as soon as it has arrived at this point. It was interesting, and fit matter for a novel, only when he could display it as ex-

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citing, or very sad, or comic. It would not have occurred to him to construct a drama out of the thoughts and emotions of David looking at Agnes ten years after their marriage. That—for him—would not have been, was not, a story. And a story, made as full, as adventurous, as surprising, as appealing to our sense of pity and humor as he could contrive it, was for Dickens the only possible form of the novel. He saw it in no other shape.

And before we come actually to *Mrs. Dalloway,* let us pause at a point about half way between Mrs. Woolf and Dickens. *The Old Wives' Tale* is, in bulk, comparable with *David Copperfield.* And, like that book, it has a long and complicated story to tell. Indeed, Mr. Bennett tells more of the story than Dickens did. He follows his two heroines from their very early youth to their death as old women. And he, too, uses adventure, change, exciting events, appeals to our emotions, as aids to hold our interest. But look a little closer, and a profound difference between the two novelists appears. When Dickens describes what we will call a simple domestic scene he makes it either pathetic or comic according to the natures of the people involved in it. That is to say, he heightens the colors to get a dramatic effect. Very commonly, he heightens them to melodrama. But for Mr. Bennett the drama lies actually in the domestic simplicity itself. He sees in the ordinary events of life, preparing of meals, making of beds, falling ill, an immense and staggering drama. These men and women, so calmly and faithfully going about their little daily tasks, are the battlegrounds of terrific forces. They are indeed themselves terrific forces. Love, jealousy, passion, hatred, courage, daring—all the monstrous emotions of a Webster play are here at work. And Constance Povey, growing old, growing plump, living what anyone might call a dull and sheltered life, is yet a vast tragic figure, engaged in a struggle as momentous as any in classic drama, and as foredoomed. In *The Old Wives' Tale* two of the chief characters are not named as such. The name of one is Living and of the other Death, and measured against these the merely human characters assume heroic shape.

The Story has now—as you see—been followed into the hearts and minds of the characters. It is not that things do not happen to Constance and Sophia. The most startling things happen to Sophia; she elopes, sees a man guillotined, is deserted by her husband, and caught in the siege of Paris—a train of events that had they befallen David Copperfield would have been related with a wealth of detail, humor and pathos, that would have made of them a memorable and vivid drama. But for Bennett, the dramatic, the memorable, lie not in the events themselves nor even in what happened to Sophia when she was caught up in them. They lie in the emotions of courage, contempt, and terror that they arouse in Sophia, her stolidity in face of them, her fierce, magnificent hold on life. He does not neglect the external drama. But he—as it were—X-rays it for us, shows us the blood pulsing in the veins, the heart beating with fear and anger and love. So that we get a double drama, life dealing with men and women and men and women dealing with life.

And now—primed with our knowledge of what the Story meant to Dickens and (when he wrote *The Old Wives' Tale*) to Mr. Bennett—we are a little better equipped to approach *Mrs. Dalloway.* The very first thing we observe is that the Story—to Mrs. Virginia Woolf—is hardly in any way the Story as it appeared to Dickens and appears to Arnold Bennett. *Mrs. Dalloway,* compared with the two books we have examined, is a short novel, but no shorter than the average modern novel. It begins with a morning when Mrs. Dalloway goes out to buy the flowers for her party, and ends, with the party, on the evening of the same day. Reading the story of that one day in her life we do indeed gather a number of facts of a sufficiently

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dramatic nature, that another man was in love—tempestuously and unhappily—with Mrs. Dalloway before she married her husband, that a young man (not even an acquaintance of Mrs. Dalloway's) crazed by his experiences in the war, has flung himself out of a window onto the spikes of the railings below, that her daughter's middle-aged friend is cruelly unhappy. Things happen in this book with the glancing rapidity of a shuttle flying backwards and forwards across the threads. The rejected lover returns in time for the party, and we get, from his words and reminiscent thoughts and Mrs. Dalloway's, the story of his marriage and of his present situation as lover of a young married woman. We get the tragic history of the war-shocked young man and his Italian wife. We even gain a considerable knowledge of Mrs. Dalloway's husband, of her daughter and of some of her friends. But all that part of the story which does not fall within the actual time limits of the book—one day from morning to evening—takes place *off*. What we know of them we know only from the thoughts and from the few, the very few words dropped by the characters. What Mrs. Woolf offers us—in place of the long varied panorama of David Copperfield's life or of *The Old Wives' Tale*—is the spectacle of Mrs. Dalloway caught, immobilized, as it were, for one moment in time, with her life revolving round her, so that we see her with her thoughts darting back into the past and forward into the future, and catch a glimpse of the infinite (infinite in the sense that we cannot count them) number of revolving lives which touch the circle of hers at one or many points and in their turn touch and are touched by others, a world-wide pattern of interlaced and separately revolving circles.

Now this is not, as Mr. Robinson reproachfully points out, in the least what he has come to expect of the Story. It gets, comparatively speaking, nowhere—merely from the buying of flowers for the party to the party itself. During which time nothing, of the slightest importance, has happened to Mrs. Dalloway or been expected—in the way of human emotions—from Mrs. Dalloway. But it reaches out in a multitude of directions. It dazzles us with lights and cross-lights flung over the lives and into the hearts and minds of the people involved. Looked at in one way, it is like a single knob of that necessary spine, from which, if we are expert enough, we are to reconstruct the whole animal. Looked at in another it is more like a glassful of sea water which contains in small space all the qualities of the sea itself, even, if we agitate the glass, its restless tossing. Even—if we plunge the glass back into the sea and hold it there—its width and depth, mirrored through the glass sides of our small container.

But Mr. Robinson is not satisfied. Grateful though he tries to be for the unexpected illuminations, the minute and exquisite convolutions of the fragment of living time offered him by Mrs. Woolf, he is nervous. He feels that if this cavalier treatment of the Story—by one of the most talented of Georgian novelists—were encouraged, the Story might eventually disappear entirely, and he be left without even a bone of that prehistoric monster. Left, in fact, with something so fluid and nebulous that it will slip through his fingers altogether and leave him staring at the pattern made by the sunlight on the floor of his room.

He is, I think, over-anxious. I think it far more likely that a novelist will arise, able to use—in the service of the Story—the new methods of lighting employed by Mrs. Woolf. Able, with their help, so to illumine and enrich the Story that the novel, in his hands, takes on a new lease of life. But lest Mr. Robinson should suppose that the art of narration, the *Story* as he knows it, is in any real danger, lest he imagine that we have no modern masters of that most human of the arts, I will remind him of a passage from another of the Georgians, and ask him to place it beside a similar passage from the work of any of the very great novelists. He will find

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that for clearness and beauty of style, and for swift, clean movement it holds its own. It occurs in *Right off the Map,* by C. E. Montague, and is part of the march of the Rian army up the fatal Valley.

"The road up the valley grew rougher that day as they marched. After six miles it came to an abrupt end at the ruins of two cheese-makers' log huts. At one time a fair bridle track had gone on from here to a few goat-herds' huts at the head of the valley. But the valley's English owner had found that its pastoral use impaired its value for the stalking of wild goats: so he had made it derelict six years before, and floods and storms had abolished all trace of the track. No word of all this seemed to have reached the Rian War Office. Its Staff map was seven years old, and Willan had noted on his copy that a good track for horses and men was marked as running up almost to Boat Pass.

"The valley itself was growing rougher, all that day. The torrent had ravaged it brutally and capriciously: now it would eat out a new bed for itself through a starveling wood of pine and walnut; then, when the wood was laid waste, the torrent would dam itself off again from the mess of naked roots and rotting timber that it had made: it would throw a wild stockade of bleached boulders across its last bed while it turned aside to tear a new channel somewhere else for its boiling flood of melted ice mixed with grey granules of granite.

"There was a kind of beastly grandeur about the scene of these gadding devastations. From now onward almost the whole level width of the valley was strewn with stones of all sizes and shapes, from pebbles to thousand-ton blocks. The place was like one monster tip; for millions of years the peaks higher up had shot their rubbish here, after carting it down on the endless bands of moraines. Then the torrent had played the deuce with this refuse; like a wild boar in a temper it had rooted up furrows this way and that with the vast wanton strength of its tusks.

"On any rough ground the worst of roads is luxury, compared with roadlessness. Even a rude track gives direction. Where the road ended, the pace of the little army came down by about three-quarters. No regular order of march was possible now. Over the waste of rocks, boulders and scree the men and mules scrambled and stumbled as best they could, each man picking the easiest way he could find, while keeping as near as he might to the general stream of his company or platoon. He was not always very near it.

"For half an hour or so the men would be jumping from boulder to boulder, high above the ground; then they would have to wade ankle-deep in loose granular shale. On whichever side of the main torrent they were it would look as if the better going were on the other. So they crossed and recrossed the stream many times, partly fording it and partly using chance stepping-stones. Each time they waded the stream their soaked boots became softer, and so did the soles of their feet; thus any hard and sharp stone under a foot could batter or punch it to much greater advantage.

"Some of the officers fretted sadly about the inevitable remission of march discipline. They felt that troops not marching in fours or in file could scarcely be called troops at all. But the men pushed on stoutly, and did not abuse their accidental liberty. At every fresh crossing of the stream they larked and splashed one another, but did not loiter seriously. They sang and chaffed in all the dialects of the original Britain and of the ones overseas.

"That day the sun came back: it beat down on the heads of the men from a sky of hot tin, and it beat up at their eyes from the rain-washed and sun-bleached stones underfoot, most of them too hot to hold. Also it swiftly dried, and more than dried their often-soaked boots.

. . . . At half-past four an hour's halt was ordered. Many of the men took off their boots, having just crossed the torrent again,

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and put them out to dry on the stones. Some of them laughingly compared the leaks at their respective seams. A few had to shuffle along, with their soles on the ground, to keep their foot-gear on at all, so completely was it breaking up. At the end of the hour some of the sun-dried boots had baked hard and brittle, like pastry; they broke at the wrinkles sooner than smooth out again. Willan had to report to the brigade commander that many men would soon be too footsore to walk.

"The Colonel growled and made a show of being the hard and exacting commander, the merciless user-up of his men. But he wasn't. . . . So he halted the column five miles short of the point it should have reached that day."

The book from which this passage is taken is one which any living novelist would be the better and greater man for having written. It is only when we compare it with Tolstoy's *War and Peace* that we see, in what degree and by what quality of faith lacking in it, it falls short of unequivocal greatness.

So much for the Story. We have discovered that the Georgians can, and often do, make Antic Hay with it. And when we come to the Characters of the Georgian novel we find the same disposition to break up and to make fluid and transparent the engagingly solid creations of the Victorian and Edwardian novelists. The process has been gradual. In the novels of Thackeray the hero is engaged in doing and suffering things. If he reflects, it is about his actions and emotions or those of the other characters. The hero of a novel by Mr. H. G. Wells is also engaged in doing things, but he reflects less about them than about all kinds of other things, the way the world is managed—rather, since this is Mr. Wells's book, mismanaged—the complications of sex, and the possibilities of science. We see Remington in *The New Machiavelli* in two lights—as he acts and as he thinks. But the characters of Ford Madox Ford's four remarkable novels about Christopher Tietjens are not shown to us in this dual way. We do not see them. We see *by means of* them. We use Tietjens's mind to think with, and we feel what he does in the same way as we feel that our hands—when we have sent them an order to grip the table—*are* gripping the table. As the story requires it, we use in the same way the minds of other characters. The effect produced on us is, to be sure, a second-hand one. We are not, in actual fact, standing in Tietjens's boots in a trench in France. And yet we are not by any means so detached from him as if the story were being told us, in the Victorian manner, from the outside. We *hear and feel* with our eyes, as well as see with them, as we read. The effect is amazingly vivid. It is indeed so vivid that Mr. Robinson, that quiet and respectable little man, profoundly dislikes it. He did not want to be made to perform painful intellectual gymnastics when he began to read about Christopher Tietjens. He was prepared to laugh or cry or gasp. To follow (being as he has told us, a serious reader) the thoughts, as well as the adventures, of the man in the book. But not to think them himself. That is going too far. It is too bad for Mr. Ford Madox Ford.

We will not quarrel with Mr. Robinson. It is true that, using this peculiar method in the four Tietjens novels, Ford Madox Ford has succeeded in creating a picture of the years between 1912 and 1926 which wipes out (as the flame from a furnace would wipe out the light of a candle) such a picture as that drawn by Mr. Galsworthy in *The White Monkey* and *The Silver Spoon*. No other work (I am speaking of the four books as if they were one) has so imprisoned the restless and violent spirit of those years when the ground moved under our feet.

But Ford Madox Ford has contrived a miracle. Or, if you prefer it, an illusion. It is the miracle of the burning bush, which burned and was not consumed. His characters are enveloped in flame, outlined and transparent in a fiery vortex. But it is only too obvious that the miracle might not have

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come off. The flames, the burning, intense phrases, might have leapt—and reduced the characters to ashes. Which is precisely what happens in those ultra-modern novels written in sharp, jerky sentences, splendidly destitute of verbs. And reminiscent of nothing so much as of a fat woman with palpitations. When Mr. Robinson opens one of these books by accident he hastily puts it down and comes to borrow a book from my shelf—not a long shelf—of Georgian novelists. I always lend him the same book: *"C"* by Maurice Baring.

And while some of the Georgians have thus riddled the old solid notion of a Character through and through—and spiked the poor remains on the end of one of their horrid sharp little novels—others have exploited, to its last quivering nerve, the one thing forbidden to their predecessors: Sex.

It is not to be supposed that Dickens was unaware of all the emotions, thoughts, and happenings that we have come, partly for convenience' sake, to bundle together under that head. He was aware of a good deal that the convention of his time did not allow. Listen to this. "'Wot I like in that 'ere style of writin',' said the elder Mr. Weller, 'is that there ain't no callin' names in it—no Wenuses, nor nothin' o' that kind. Wot's the good o' callin' a young 'ooman a Wenus or an angel, Sammy?'

"'Ah! what indeed?' replied Sam.

"'You might just as well call her a griffin, or a unicorn, or a king's arms at once, which is wery well known to be a col-lection o' fabulous animals,' added Mr. Weller."

But when Dickens draws a good woman she is always a Wenus or an angel. And a fabulous animal too. We are long past that timidity. One Georgian novelist may, giving himself and us a holiday, turn a lady into a fox and shut up a man in a cage in the zoo. But the novels of his contemporaries are full of foxes who have become ladies and of caged animals dressed as men. Now, I do not ask that the Georgian novelist should return to that attitude towards the sexes so adequately described by Gibbon. "The chaste severity of the Fathers, in whatever related to the commerce of the two sexes, flowed from the same principle; their abhorrence of every enjoyment which might gratify the sensual, and degrade the spiritual, nature of man. It was their favorite opinion, that if Adam had preserved his obedience to the Creator, he would have lived for ever in a state of virgin purity, and that some harmless mode of vegetation might have peopled Paradise with a race of innocent and immortal beings." Even Mr. Robinson is now resigned to the truth that birth, marriage and dying are three such overwhelming and significant events in human life that they need not in a novel all take place *off,* or occur if they do occur wrapped in modest clouds, like cherubs on a painted ceiling. But what shakes, and with justice, Mr. Robinson's belief in the supremacy of his own times, is the monstrous stress laid in the Georgian novel on those gestures of our being which we share with the lower animals. It is as if the Georgian novelist, having called in Sex to redress the balance of the Victorians, had mislaid half the other weights. The values are too often as distorted as ever.

It is not that there are no exceptions to this generalization about the Georgian novel. There are exceptions—and startling ones. There is, to choose one novelist at random from among those we have not yet met, R. H. Mottram. *The Spanish Farm Trilogy* and *Our Mr. Dormer* are notable books, not merely for their freedom from the obsession of sex. But here is an odd thing. Though in *The Spanish Farm* the Great War, that colossal protagonist, so fills the canvas that, with a comparatively small number of other characters, it makes a crowd and a full book, in *Our Mr. Dormer* we have a distinct sense not that Mr. Mottram was uninterested in sex but that he deliberately left it out. There is an effect of a man turning his back.

And that, regarded as a gesture, is no use. Sex, with all that word implies, has invaded

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the novel to stay. It implies, indeed, changes too insidious and overwhelming to be contained under the heading, taken suitably from the newspaper files, Sex In The Modern Novel. The worst of these changes is the one already noticed. Novelists having been for a long time silent, by order, on an aspect of living, many of them will, when the order is withdrawn, talk of nothing else. Tiresome but natural. The other changes (here we touch on what really matters) amount to a revolution. The Story becomes another story entirely now that the novelist need no longer remain modestly on this side of the bedroom door up to which he has led his characters. His conception of the methods by which he can describe and explain them to us alters profoundly. The centre of gravity of his book shifts. The rhythm adjusts itself.

The invasion has levelled all the walls. (The roof being clean gone, the sky and stars are visible, but there is no denying that the noise is dreadful—cars, aeroplanes, trains, wireless, telephones, and an incessant undertone of talking and typing.) The emotional relationships and conduct of men and women are exposed in a searching and immodest light. The novel might almost say of itself what Keats says in one of his letters: "When I was a schoolboy I thought a fair woman a pure Goddess; my mind was a soft nest in which some one of them slept, though she knew it not." Except that it is not possible to regard the novels of Thackeray and Dickens, to say nothing of Trollope, Meredith, and Hardy, as schoolboys which have now grown up into the works of James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, and Aldous Huxley, this would be an accurate enough description of the attitude of the older novelists to their fair women. It no longer, except in an enormously qualified degree, describes the attitude of the Georgians even to the virtuous women in their books. When Mr. Huxley draws the portrait of a good woman—as of Emily in *Antic Hay*—he spares her nothing and brings her finally to humiliation and betrayal. He does it casually, too, as if it were all in the day's work for goodness to be exploited and mocked. And this is something new in novel writing. In simpler days a good woman so treated would either die as a triumphant protest against the hard hearts of men or be rescued from ignominy before the end of the book. A new spirit is abroad in the country of fiction. The Georgian novelist has no sure faith that goodness will triumph, even though only in death. His treatment of his characters proclaims to the world his loss of this faith. In what then does he believe if he has lost confidence in the power of goodness? In the possibility of justice? In truth? To be honest with you, I think there is very little in which the Georgian novelist believes, save when he believes, as desperate men do, that man's courage is its own sole reward and that when Mr. Valiant-for-truth entered the River to cross to the other side—he was drowned. And it is perhaps that which is lacking from his work. It is perhaps because he has no living faith that he has written nothing that deserves to be called a masterpiece. Nothing to take its place beside *The Egoist, Jude the Obscure,* and *The Old Wives' Tale.*

But something has been, or is being, accomplished, none the less. The Georgian novelist has brought to the treatment of his characters an ease and a fluidity which cannot but prove of immense value in the hands of the great novelist who is either not yet born or has not begun to write. You have only to imagine that *David Copperfield* was written by an author with the exploring philosophy of an Aldous Huxley and the delicate perceptions of a Virginia Woolf to catch a glimpse of the possible future of the novel. For like little Mr. Robinson, I do prefer that a novel should be, above all, about people. About what Mr. Robinson calls "life". He will listen to talk, if it is good enough. He will even let himself be preached at or reformed. But only if you give him life—pressed down and running over. Life, so illumined, so made clear and meaning-

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ful, that he is given something to take away into his own private corner. Some word to live by. Some spark at which to warm himself. He is not a reader of Emerson, nor even an admirer who pretends to be a reader, but he once came across a remark made by that rather rocking-chair philosopher with which he involuntarily agreed. "The fine young people despise life; but in me, and such as with me are free from dyspepsia, and to whom a day is a sound and solid good, it is a great excess of politeness to look scornful and to cry for company. I am grown by sympathy a little eager and sentimental, but leave me alone, and I should relish every hour and what it brought me, the potluck of the day, as heartily, as the oldest gossip in the bar-room. I am thankful for small mercies."

In the meantime, while Mr. Robinson is waiting for that great modern novel which has not yet been written, he has consoled himself not unhappily with Francis Brett Young's *The Black Diamond,* D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers,* Norman Douglas's *South Wind,* R. H. Mottram's *The Spanish Farm Trilogy,* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando.*

So much then for the Story and the Characters. There remains the Pattern of the novel. At this point Mr. Robinson's eye becomes dreamy. I have a feeling that what flitted across Mr. Polly's mind on his wedding day has just flitted across his—"a faint phantom of a certain lill dog," the "lill dog" that had twice saved Mr. Polly from an embarrassing and boring situation, but could not save him from his bride. Neither is Mr. Robinson to be saved.

Pattern is not a necessity to a novel. That is to say, a novel can come into being without one. Most of the novels of Sir Walter Scott did. A novel can be merely a series of related events, on the intrinsic interest of which the novelist relies to hold the interest of his readers. This describes with sufficient fairness the *Waverley Novels.* Some otherwise intelligent people cannot read them. Little Mr. Robinson cannot get on with them at all: he finds them (he admits it with a distinct sense of shame) dull and confusing. I do not agree with him, but I can see why he should feel like that about a series of novels so crammed with excellent things, humor, beauty, observation. And so entirely formless. Patternless. I shall not allow myself to be entrapped into speculating whether, had their author worked to some vital plan, the *Waverley Novels* would have been finer books. Since it is clear that if he had they would not have been the *Waverley Novels,* but another person of the same name.

It is clear that the Pattern, like the Story and the Characters, has two sides, an inside and an outside. An excellent example of outside Pattern is to our hand in Virginia Woolf's novel, *To the Lighthouse.* This book is constructed with great care in the shape of an ascending spiral. We begin with Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay and their large family of children living in their summer cottage on the coast. The youngest boy, James, is wishing that they will be able to go off in a boat to the lighthouse next day. "If it is fine," says Mrs. Ramsay. "It will not be fine," Mr. Ramsay says, and the little boy hates him for the savage passion for exactness and the overwhelming need to be believed in with which he beats his family. That is the first round of the spiral. Its ascending curve takes the form of a superb interlude called Time Passes, which it would vulgarize to call a prose poem, but which is in fact as exquisite a piece of writing as the Georgian novel can show. And so we come to the second round of the spiral, where all that has happened on the first repeats itself, on the different plane, with just that change of circumstance, that ironic twist, which Time, who plays the rôle of dramatic artist in the life of this universe, has given it. Mrs. Ramsay is dead, a daughter is dead, a son has been killed. And now, after the interval of years, the visit to the lighthouse does take place, when James no

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longer wants to go. The Pattern is finished.

I have ignored completely the inner side of Mrs. Woolf's pattern in this book which if it had no inner side would not be the enchanting little book it is. For a pattern imposed on a novel from the outside may easily turn out a Procrustean bed. A book made to conform to a Pattern can die of that act of faith. The later novels of Henry James are written to such a pattern, to round off which he recklessly lopped legs and arms until life ebbed from his victims. And all that is left to the characters of *The Ambassadors* is the exquisite semblance of the life they might have lived.

The inner Pattern is the soul of a novel, which, if it lacks it, has not a soul, but is as the beasts that perish. The rhythm. Which is dictated by some necessity of the novelist's mind. Or of his spirit. It is the faith by which the dry bones of plot and character live. It is what Mr. Robinson is groping after when he says of a Dostoievski novel: "Yes, but what is it all about?" It informs two novels so widely different as *Henry Esmond* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. It is what, ultimately, these books are "about". I could, if you had the patience and curiosity to read it, draw out for you some formula that would explain, almost as badly as the programme notes explain a Beethoven Symphony, what Thackeray intended *Henry Esmond* to express. That courage and kindness between man and man do not fall into the earth and bear no seed. That life is, at bottom, decent and orderly. Something like that. *The Brothers Karamazov* would daunt me. The internal rhythm there is one that cannot, even partially, be compressed into a formula. It needs to be apprehended in the soul, where a smaller, narrower pattern may be comprehended, more or less, by the intelligence. This is true, in varying degree, of any great novel.

For the Pattern, the rhythm, of a novel is the expression of the novelist's attitude to life, to his fellow-men, and to God. Hence it happens that great novels are written only by men whose minds and souls are able to see, hear, feel and understand more of life than do the minds and souls of ordinary men. So that if a novelist is, as it were, blind and deaf to part of life, if he is in ways obtuse and insensitive, his novel will be smaller and thinner in just the degree that he is blind, deaf and stupid.

There is perhaps a blind spot, a dead end, in the Georgian novelists, which accounts for the fact that although they are writing books that show a higher degree of technical excellence than at any time in the history of the novel, and a remarkable average of talent, they are not writing masterpieces. Not even in America.

Conscious ingratitude has never been one of Mr. Robinson's faults. Prejudiced he is (we are all prejudiced), with the hardly reasoned prejudices of a respectable little man of quiet manners in favor of the orderly, the understandable, and the useful. He will struggle with a difficult novel, but not a moment after the suspicion has crossed his mind that he is searching in a dark untidy room for something which is not there. In his wandering up and down the Georgian countryside he is all the time on the lookout for something that (he offers the description of himself with an apologetic smile) will "*mean* something to a rather stupid sort of little man". But the company he finds himself in, sitting, on this warm sunny day, between the window of the café and the plane trees bordering the road, a little awes him. He feels nervously respectful, keeps wanting to jump up and snatch his hat off as one known figure after another goes by. With, if the truth must be told, hardly a glance for little, eager, admiring sentimental Mr. Robinson. For he is conscious that his half-formed dissatisfactions taste of ingratitude. What right has a man to complain who, within the compass of a few books, can enjoy the unassuming loveliness of Francis Brett Young, the intellectual enchantments of Aldoux Huxley,

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the subtle spirit of Virginia Woolf, the wit and scholarly *panache* of Norman Douglas, the masculine, sensitive, and solitary genius of Hope Mirrlees, and the steadfast charm and incorruptible *decency* of Hugh Walpole, Maurice Baring, and R. H. Mottram? Who can enter *le pays bleu* on the left hand of de la Mare and Stella Benson? Who can dream of the dark night of his soul with D. H. Lawrence, though that wayward genius is "now past the healthful dreams of the sun, moon, and stars in their proper courses . . . which," Sir Thomas Browne assures us, "are the visions of healthful sleeps, and at a good distance from the grave"? Who can journey (as an earlier pilgrim once journeyed, to her dear satisfaction, with Mr. Valiant-for-truth) with C. E. Montague?

No: Mr. Robinson is not ungrateful. Though there is a question in him, transmitted, perhaps, in his blood, which remembers dimly an era of large simplicity and all-embracing faith. This question remains unanswered by any Georgian novelist. He has, indeed, not altogether lost hope of being satisfied at the hands of Mr. Aldous Huxley, who possesses a nicety of language, a forward vision, and a delicate sensibility which might bring him to be the greatest of all the Georgians. But Mr. Huxley has always drawn back from greatness. He has in him little capacity for laughter or tears. He neither laughs nor cries: but smiles, and emits a faint scream of anguish when rasped by life, as, being thin-skinned, often happens to him. He has an immense inverted sentimentality and a loathing of cruelty, injustice, and disorder which has so far had the better of him. And he fears to fall. He is young, but (and this is not an encouragement to those who with Mr. Robinson regard him as the Georgian novelist with most principle of growth in him) he has much of the temper of the author of *Religio Medici*. "If there be any truth in Astrology, I may outlive a Jubilee: as yet I have not seen one revolution of Saturn, nor hath my pulse beat thirty years, and yet excepting one, have seen the ashes and left underground all the Kings of Europe; have been contemporary to three Emperors, four Grand Signiors, and as many Popes: methinks I have outlived myself, and begin to be weary of the sun; I have shaken hands with delight in my warm blood and canicular days; I perceive I do anticipate the vices of age; the world to me is but a dream or mock-show, and we all therein but pantaloons and antics, to my severer contemplations."

Then, if not Aldous Huxley (or not yet) why not Virginia Woolf? There are moments when, blushing for the difficulty he finds in saying suitably what he deeply feels, little Mr. Robinson puts his money on her rather than on Mr. Huxley. One of these moments happened to him after he had read *Orlando*. He read it with delight, with awe, disturbed, enchanted, exalted. And yet wondering.

Mrs. Woolf is, beyond comparison, a master of language. The word *style* has a faintly disreputable flavor. It has come to mean a quality which can be imposed on a novel from the outside, a trick, in which the quickness of the hand deceives the eye. The *style* of *Orlando* is imposed on it from within—the spirit made articulate. It is just, flexible, and lovely. Add that it owes to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, more to Sterne, and confess that Mrs. Woolf apprenticed herself to masters who were good enough to teach her what she already divined. "We must shape our words," thought Orlando, "until they are the thinnest integument for our thoughts." In one light, the book resembles a tapestry of which every detail is carefully contrived, the grass enamelled with flowers, the stones of a castle, the branches of the candlesticks, the folds of a gown, and the feathers in a young man's cap. It deals with space and time in the arbitrary fashion of tapestries—a century dropped between one group and the next. In another light, everything, flowers, houses, candles, plumed hats,

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streets, cities, clouds, all have become translucent, a lucence stained with thought. What we see is a process, the very chemistry of thought and action. In another and less favorable light the book has the air of a strange and lovely *pastiche*. In no light does it cease to be strange, subtle, exciting, and lovely. It enters the soul of the reader through his ears. To turn, immediately on reading *Orlando,* to a book by any other living English novelist, is to find his beauties commonplace, his style poor and flat.

And yet (we are back again with little Mr. Robinson, now fairly wringing his hands in an anguish of self-abasement) —— Something is missing. What is missing? Why is it that the author of *Orlando* is not a very great novelist?

It may be, I think, because she lacks humanity. She is in some way, or by some word laid on her, outside humanity. She sees as an artist sees, listens as a musician does, to common suffering, crying, laughing, doing good and doing mischief. Doubtless she suffers, weeps, laughs, herself—but not as a man does. As a fallen angel might. Or a changeling. She has no roots in our common earth. Her genius, carefully tended, pruned, enriched, has no roots in our common earth.

She can reproduce a scene with the fidelity to detail and clear coloring of a Breughel. And think about it until she has destroyed it. She is cursed with double vision. "She looked there [this is Orlando, but it might be Virginia Woolf] now, long, deeply, profoundly, and immediately the ferny path up the hill along which she was walking became not entirely a path, but partly the Serpentine; the hawthorn bushes were partly ladies and gentlemen sitting with card-cases and gold-mounted canes; the sheep were partly tall Mayfair houses; everything was partly something else, as if her mind had become a forest with glades branching here and there; things came nearer, and further, and mingled and separated and made the strangest alliances and combinations in an incessant chequer of light and shade."

Yet Mrs. Woolf remains the most remarkable figure among all those to whom Mr. Robinson's insistent respectful gestures have, bless the man, been drawing our attention for the last hour.

Why, then, is it that with so much amazing and varied talent at their command the Georgian novelists have produced no work that lifts itself, plain to be seen, above the snow-line? This criticism, if criticism it be, applies equally to America, where in a plethora of good noisy books the tranquil loveliness of Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* and the solid excellence of Sinclair Lewis's *Arrowsmith* richly deserve remark. It has been suggested that in a period of very high average talent the air is not favorable to masterpieces. To me this seems merely to be repeating, in another form, that there are no masterpieces in the Georgian period. There should be a discoverable reason. We should be able to point to some—misfit—in the Georgian novelist's relation to his times and say: "That explains it". Once or twice, in the course of this too casual survey, I have thrown out a suggestion that might, had I been assured enough of my competence to pursue it, have led us somewhere. And before I throw out one more (to suggest is the limit of my authority) I will remind you of the promise I made you before we set out on a journey which has got no farther than this, I hope not disagreeable, post of observation. That promise I shall now fulfil and refer you to one of the works which so confused me when, distrusting my own credentials, I consulted it before inviting you to accompany me.

Mr. Joseph Gordon Macleod is a specialist among practising critics. His essay—he has called it *Beauty and the Beast*—while supposing to deal also with poetry and drama, in fact concerns itself largely with the contemporary novel. Now Mr. Macleod

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has the confidence of his special knowledge. He has discovered and can point to the masterpieces of modern literature. He has found the sublime. Indeed, he is continually finding it. Here in his own words is perhaps the greatest of his discoveries. "Art in philosophy, ascending to the sublime: Art in psychology, delving to the sublime: Art in sensibility, extending to the sublime. Modern science caught up by modern Art; Modern Balance achieved; Modern Beauty and the Modern Beast. This is T. S. Eliot. He is greatly in touch with the sublime. . . . Here is a balance of the two interdependents worthy of Browning, worthy of Shakespeare, or of Dante or Milton." This would have been enough discovery for most explorers, but Mr. Macleod made others. I do not think he can claim to have *discovered* the family of Sitwells but he has found new beauties in them, like one of those patient Egyptologists who after successfully rifling one tomb find another and better one behind. "It is," he says, "their use of associated ideas and the transferred epithet that makes their music, and makes it little trouble for them to reach the sublime. But they are not faultless. They are too brilliant. They have a skill and a sensuous music that is absolutely unrivalled even by Milton or Sappho." But, even so, Mr. Macleod does not think that the Sitwells are quite so good as Mr. T. S. Eliot.

He records incidentally a remarkable and, so far as I know, elsewhere unnoticed attempt to reach the sublime from a new angle. "At Oxford a year ago," he says, "a young poet named Charles Davis attempted and all but succeeded in creating a psychological poem by means of geometry: and if he did not quite succeed in attaining therethrough to the sublime, it was because of his own immaturity, not because of any hostile element in his method." And what at last defeated me, and drove me sadly to fold up his map, and trust to my wits and your forbearance, was a paragraph which occurred quite suddenly towards the close of his book and ran: "The avengers are frustrated. They have thrown down their spears, and sit on their helmets as stools, among the fragments of standing orders awaiting words that will never come. The comforts too are idle. All day, all night they have prowled in the streets with the stealthy slink of their horrible haunches." I cannot tell you how profoundly I feel my inability to make anything of this. Tried on Mr. Robinson, it brought him very low. Very low indeed. Rousing himself later from his fit of depression he said gloomily: "I suppose someone reads these books. Tell me. Where are all these people going? *Where do they get off?"*

I do not know where they are going, nor where they get off. Probably they do not get off at all. They go straight through to Parnassus.

I cannot tell you what is wrong with the Georgian novel, nor with the Georgian novelists who so disappointingly do not write masterpieces. I have suggested that they lack faith. But faith in what? In the stability of the world? In the likelihood that man, so apt to imagine means to destroy himself and his works, will yet devise some means to save them? It is not to be supposed that that dreadful *sense of the abyss* which darkens the minds even of ordinary men in this day would not fall across the minds of the novelists. Unrest, discomfort, danger, none of these qualities of an age has ever choked the breath out of its art. But scepticism, the failure of hope, is a deadlier and more withering spirit than any of these.

I believe there to be even more in it than this, though this might be enough. There is a lack of faith but there is a lack of knowledge, too. In what concerns the advancement of learning the Georgian novelist is many decades behind the Georgian scientist. An immense march separates contemporary science from the scientific scene of Darwin and Huxley. And the novelists are far in the rear of that march. Now it is not in any

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way required of a novelist that he should know, actually know, anything about the scientific achievements of his age. But it is required, of a great novelist, that he should be awake to the spirit that is producing these achievements, able to breathe the air of the world which is being created by them. Not created, or to be created. But which is being created. For a great novelist is great *in his own times*. And because he is, more intensely, more vividly, and with more and deeper understanding of their spirit, *of* his times than is the ordinary man or the ordinary novelist. He has a greater awareness, is, as it were, sensitized over a greater area of his being to the forces moving about him. It is in this sense that all through Shakespeare's work we get the feeling that his world was beating in on him from every side. He was like a man living in a room, all windows. Life, the life of his times, of his world, poured in on him. Compared with him, Marlowe was a man looking through one door down a long, narrow corridor of passion.

It is because Shakespeare is so fully and magnificently his age that he is also ours and, so far as we are able to guess at them, all ages. But the Georgian novelist is not his age. He is only a part of it—its unrest, its nostalgia for a vanished leisure, its questioning, its off-hand courage, its ready smile. To the immense stirring of new life, the expectation, the accomplishment, of modern science, he is a stranger. In the room of his mind more than half the windows are shuttered. The ether surrounding it is troubled with no messages for his ears.

I am not persuaded that those Georgian novelists, whose names we know, and for whose notable achievement we must have a sincere respect, could by taking thought add anything to their stature. Unless it were Virginia Woolf. Or Aldous Huxley. The great modern novelist for whom we are looking will not be self-made. He will be born, or has already been born. He will be born aware of his times in that supreme degree which is the birthright of the great artist. As much as the modern scientist knows of life, he, *in his own terms* (which are not theirs), will know. He may indeed know more, be more awake, more receptive, stealing on them, by native virtue and inspiration, a march as wide as they have stolen on their novelist contemporaries. What he knows he will express in the form his novels take. I believe that they will take a form we shall recognize as that which traditionally belongs to the novel. But the spirit will not be traditional. That will be new. It will contain and overpass all that the Georgian novel, the novel of Aldous Huxley and Virginia Woolf, has taught us of the possibilities of the novel as a medium through which modern life becomes articulate. It will be a medium incalculably more supple, more expressive. It will be the most completely expressive medium the novel has yet had.

Mr. Robinson is afraid that he may not live to read the novels of this still unheralded master. But for all he knows—for all you and I know—the pen may just have been laid to the paper on which they will be written.

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ATHERTON *versus* GRUNDY

THE FORTY YEARS' WAR

by Lionel Stevenson

To have written thirty-seven books in forty years, and to have provoked violent controversy by every one of them, serenely weathering the typhoons of abuse which propelled each novel into the harbor of best-sellers—the holder of this record, unique in American literature, is Gertrude Atherton. Her first novels, competing with the established fame of such geniuses as F. Marion Crawford, Frances Hodgson Burnett and Julian Hawthorne, shattered the placidity of the late 'eighties into delighted horror; in mid-career she held her own against such upstart rivals as Winston Churchill and Paul Leicester Ford; today she quietly filches her share from the laurels of Mr. John Erskine and Madame E. Barrington.

Defying all traditions of how to retain success as a popular novelist, Mrs. Atherton never repeats herself. The only thing that could ever be predicted about any of her novels was that it would be utterly unlike any of her others. She has an uncanny faculty of being always one jump ahead of the rabble; every now and again, just to prove how little effort it costs her, she has produced something which is eventually proved to be not one jump but a whole generation or so in advance of the mob. Thirty-two years ago she centered a novel on the trial of a beautiful murderess and garnished it with all the sordid details; twenty-seven years ago she evolved the form of fictionized biography and was told by the critics that her fledgeling was a sport of nature which could never recur; fifteen years ago she suddenly resorted to mystery stories, forestalling Mr. Van Dine in the theory that intelligent use of psychology and social problems need not be incompatible with good mystification. There is little wonder that she smiles pityingly on the generations of critics who have depleted their reservoirs of calumny in trying to express their opinions of her.

Libraries began banning her books in 1889, when there was still some distinction in being so honored. As the 'nineties proceeded the pontiffs were lashed to paroxysms by reports that she was regarded in England and on the Continent as the leading American novelist; she was probably the first to be condemned as an expatriate, and that very fact enhanced her glamour in the eyes of a public which still associated diabolism with anyone who felt at home in Paris and Vienna. A study of her career and reputation provides indirectly an epitome of forty years of the American mind.

Mrs. Atherton's lively prejudices and slashing tactics have had much to do with her unpopularity. Born in San Francisco when that city was at the zenith of its first glory, granddaughter of Stephen Franklin, whose granduncle was the sagacious Benjamin and who was the pioneer newspaper man of the city of gold, renowned for his good looks and social elegance, Gertrude Horn had her first

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literary training in his library, which excluded contemporary books but applied no prudish censorship to the classics. After attending a finishing school in Lexington, Kentucky, where she was imbued with the austerest aristocratic notions of the Old South, she took her place in the glittering social life of her home city, made a distinguished marriage, was soon widowed and embarked on several years of travel, being provided by her family connections with an entrée into the most select circles of New York, Washington and the embassies abroad.

Then, under the pseudonym of "Frank Lin", she published her first book in 1888 and immediately sprang into prominence in a first-rate unpleasantness. For some reason that year witnessed the outbreak of a violent mania among the intellectual young ladies; a whole bevy of them scandalized the nation by publishing books of unprecedented naughtiness. The first shots were provoked by Miss Amélie Rives, of Virginia, with an indiscretion called *The Quick or the Dead?;* before the public could catch its breath, Miss Laura Jean Libby offered *Miss Middleton's Lover;* Miss Laura Daintry contributed a sizzler entitled *Eros;* and Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, of Milwaukee, fearing a waning in her recent notoriety, favored with a new collection of "offenses against decency", *Poems of Pleasure*. While volleys of critical billingsgate were being discharged rapidly against these rebels, Mrs. Atherton stepped straight into the line of fire with *What Dreams May Come*.

The influence of the established novelists was strong enough to dictate that her setting should be the English diplomatic corps and that her personæ should bear titles; but the new leaven was obvious in the virile words used by the characters and the incandescent passions expressed. Furthermore, Mrs. Atherton revealed at once her skill in seizing the fad of the moment. Those were the days when Mme Blavatsky and her Yankee lamas were first preaching reincarnation and karma to enraptured dowagers, so Mrs. Atherton based her tragedy on the fact that Harold and Weir discover themselves to be the reincarnation of their grandparents, who were illicit lovers, which fact, by some obscure argument, leads to renunciation and suicide. The critics called it "crude abnormality" and "aggravated literary hysteria," and thirty-five thousand copies were sold in three months.

All this was bad enough, but worse was to come. Next year, when Mrs. Atherton perpetrated *Hermia Suydam,* there were no other scapegoats to share the furor; it all concentrated on her. It was reported that the publishers of her previous novel "refused it on the grounds of immorality, after it had been branded as the most immoral novel ever written in the English language, by a consultation of eight learned doctors of letters". The heroine, after a youth embittered by her ugliness, by the narrowness of her life and by the dullness of her happily married sister, inherits a million dollars, has herself made beautiful by a fashionable doctor and sets out to indulge her suppressed desire for romance and power. Having formed a fierce hatred of matrimony, she goes through a series of frightful experiences and is appropriately punished for her excesses.

The yellow press throughout the country favored the scandal with its most gracious attentions. Pursued by such epithets as "obscene", "sensual", "weakly and stupidly immoral, like the day-dreams of a shop-girl", the author retired to Europe. To her surprise, she was greeted in London with enthusiasm. William Sharp reviewed her two books and introduced her to the literary arbiters of the day. She had no intention, however, of giving up the battle at home. Her manifesto had appeared in the *North American Review* under the title, "Illustrious Seconds":

> When a new writer appears and succeeds in attracting attention, the public, having read, praised, criticized, busies itself with his (or her) classification. . . . Nine out of ten authors can be classified very readily; it is the tenth's inabil-

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ity to be filed that gives him the position of master instead of pupil, and a chance to live. Every woman who has written a striking novel in England during the past ten years has been hailed as a second George Eliot. These women have doubtless been flattered, and have not realized that in resembling George Eliot they must ever remain number two. . . . This quality of reproduction has a certain contemporary value. The great reading world is not creative; consequently not particular about absolute originality. It knows what it likes from habit and is slow to make up its mind to like anything radically new. Naturally, therefore, when a new writer, who has modeled himself upon a great master or a familiar favorite, bursts into being, the public recognizes the flavor at once and is eager to enjoy and appreciate. . . . Great original genius is only recognized and admitted after a desperate fight, because there is no greater coward than the intellectual public. . . . Think of the monotony of the world's letters if no original minds had ever come to break loose from traditions, inaugurate new schools, and plant new ideas! Suppose the glorious galaxy now illuminating our past had succumbed to the inevitable fire of public protestation—what sort of a literature would we have today?

Having used her impressions of European and New York society, she next bethought her of her native state, which at that time had been introduced to the reading public chiefly by Bret Harte and Helen Hunt Jackson. She had already expressed heretical opinions, writing in *The Critic* in June, 1888, on the Californian missions:

To one who has been born and brought up among them, the sentiment and the rapture which they appear to provoke in strangers is always a little amusing. There is always the base suspicion that the raptures are due to a new object to gush over, not to any rapture-provoking quality in the object itself. Looked at with the cold eye of one indifferent to material, it is doubtful if there is any structure on earth colder, barer, uglier, dirtier, less picturesque, less romantic than a Californian mission; so cheap are they, so tawdry, so indescribably common, so suggestive of mules harbored within, and chattering unshorn priests, and dirty Mexicans, with their unspeakable young. There is none of the mellowness, nor any of the beautiful stains of age on their glaring adobe walls; nothing but whitewash, blistered, or peeling off in patches, which makes them look as if afflicted with a species of architectural leprosy. In spite of their hundred years, there is something hopelessly modern about them, something which fatally suggests a country, the ancestors of whose population have barely passed away. Mrs. Jackson had a very strong sermon to preach; but she knew that sermons, to be read, must be dressed in seductive garb. Therefore she painted up the old missions with the brush of her imagination. The sentiment she wove into her Western legend was the gift of her own nature; she found not a grain of it in the material she used. There is no sentiment in California; the place is too young, too crude. It would be like expecting poetry of an untutored urchin of thirteen.

Presumably with this realistic ideal in mind, she wrote *Los Cerritos,* the love-story of an untamed Spanish ranch girl and an American millionaire, whose wife has to be trampled in a stampede before the happy ending can be consummated. The primitive environment and emotions pleased the English critics, while the Americans muttered "crude" and "gaudy".

From this time her books were alternately of two categories, the Californian series and the others. Those of California gradually wove themselves into a panorama, depicting periods of the state's history from the early Spanish time to the present, avoiding only the gold-rush era preempted by Harte. By the device of introducing the main characters of one book as subsidiary in others, she has built up a strongly convincing illusion of reality, and even in novels which are located in other parts of the world she occasionally includes one of her Californians.

In general, the Californian novels received more approval from the critics and aroused less excitement in the public than those on other themes. A noteworthy exception was *A Daughter of the Vine* (1899) in which the heroine is a congenital dipsomaniac, temporarily cured by love but later relapsing to

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a miserable death. A typical review termed it

> . . . a sad disappointment to those readers whom *The Californians* led to hope that her undeniable talent as a novelist was at last to be rendered available for the entertainment of self-respecting readers who do not care to penetrate the spiritual slums of life in their search for diversion. *A Daughter of the Vine,* unhappily, displays the most objectionable characteristics of the author's early work raised here to the *n*th power. It is as brutal and horrifying a plot as can well be conceived, and it is not treated in a way to soften its inherent repulsiveness. The sensual side of life is represented as strongly uppermost throughout, and the whole atmosphere of the book is bitter and cruel. It is a perversion of life as well as of the author's talent.

In this, as in the other Californian books, the leading characters were easily recognizable by those who knew the originals, a fact which has always given an undertone of uneasiness to the local opinion of her books, and has prevented California from boasting about its most famous novelist with anything like the abandon accorded other native products. Nevertheless, Mrs. Atherton has always regarded San Francisco as home and since the war has been living there with only brief intervals of travel.

In contrast with the Californian series, the novels on other topics were invariably cyclone-centers. *A Question of Time* (1891) dealt with the love affair of a woman of sixty and a man half her age. One of the high points of Mrs. Atherton's career was *Patience Sparhawk and Her Times* (1897) which was banned even by the library of the author's native town and aroused fully as much horror as *Hermia Suydam.* The earlier part of the book gave a highly-colored picture of the newspaper world of New York, wherein the emancipated heroine found many opportunities to express herself; later the book showed Patience's murder of her husband and subsequent trial and imprisonment, in a vein notably precursory of the 1929 tabloid. No wonder the papers called it "lurid sensationalism", and "destitute of reserve or reticence". In the same year Mrs. Atherton published *His Fortunate Grace,* obviously based on the Marlborough-Vanderbilt marriage which had recently been a national thrill; the book was described as slanderous in its record of vices and follies in fashionable New York and cold-blooded pursuit of power and social position on both sides of the Atlantic. Next year she handled the same theme much more artistically in *American Wives and English Husbands,* one of the best of her books and one of the few effective novels of Anglo-American relations ever written.

Mrs. Atherton's greatest success in point of sales was probably *Senator North* (1900) which went through a score of editions as a result of the conjuncture of several exciting elements. Governmental circles in Washington were intimately depicted. The hero was a famous "elder statesman" in love with an enterprising high-born girl, both behaving with unimpeachable rectitude out of respect to the senator's invalid wife; the Spanish-American trouble provided a topical background, with vigorous expressions of anti-war sentiment; and the sub-plot dealt melodramatically with the problem of miscegenation. The ethics of the protagonists were debated throughout the country and the book came in for both praise and blame.

Several years before, Mrs. Atherton had publicly complained that she "could not write an article for a newspaper, much less a novel, without throwing the entire United States into a ferment", and added that there were only two papers that did not "arise and vociferate at" *Patience Sparhawk.* "I hope," she declared, "that I shall never do the United States an injustice, but I shall certainly not be deterred from telling the truth about it in every book I write." Her continued fame in England was salt for the American sores. In view of the charges of immorality against her books, it was ironical that her chief British champions were William Sharp, the gen-

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tle Highland mystic, and Rev. William Robertson Nicoll, literary dictator of the Presbyterians. In December, 1898, Nicoll wrote "she is generally spoken of now as the first of our women novelists", and the Americans gnashed their teeth in print.

Becoming convinced that in her own country critical prejudice had so attached itself to her name that she could not have a fair hearing, she laid a neat trap for her enemies by publishing *The Aristocrats* in 1901 with strict anonymity. The quarry took the bait: the papers enthusiastically speculated as to who the brilliant, witty author could be. The mystery, added to the fact that the mordant criticisms of American celebrities, both social and intellectual—ostensibly by an English noblewoman visiting the Adirondacks—were full of recognizable portraiture, gave the book an immense sale and at the height of the fuss Mrs. Atherton blandly confessed.

Another completely new departure followed in 1902. This was *The Conqueror,* a life of Alexander Hamilton based on industrious research, but presented with the technique of a novel. Mrs. Atherton forestalled not only M. Maurois and his clan by her method, but also Messrs. Hughes and Woodward by her disrespect toward national heroes. Admiring Hamilton to the point of idolatry, she did not hesitate to depict Jefferson as an unprincipled scoundrel and Washington as a stuffed shirt. Her greatest offense, however, was to make copious use of her hero's love-life. As the sales crept up toward a hundred thousand, J. P. Mowbray wrote a five-page article in *The Critic,* dripping with rancid sarcasm, in which he indicated that women were congenitally unable to understand national affairs and that *The Conqueror* was another and final proof of the distorted perspective and atrocious vulgarity of the feminine sex.

As a result of a couple of years in Austria-Hungary she wrote *Rulers of Kings* (1904) an astounding mixture of fantastic Zenda-ism and shrewd sense. With typical audacity, she introduced the emperors of Germany and Austria as major characters, endowed the latter with an imaginary daughter and bestowed her hand on the multimillionaire American hero who had the potentates in his power. The sane elements in the story, as time proved, were the revelations of how science and finance were becoming the determining factors of modern warfare and international polity. With her usual knack of being in the midst of exciting events, she made a trip home to San Francisco just in time to witness the earthquake. Within a year she had utilized it as the climax of her longest novel, *Ancestors,* the most ambitious unit of her Californian saga, an attempt to present the life of the vanished city in its entirety. Next a sojourn in Munich produced *Tower of Ivory,* the love and heart-searchings of a famous prima donna of lurid antecedents and her aristocratic young English lover. *Julia France and Her Times* traced the career of an innocent girl from her début in St. Kitt's (a favorite spot of Mrs. Atherton's ever since her Hamilton investigations) through the trials of having a lunatic husband to eventual fame as a militant leader of the English suffragettes. In 1914 she published *Perch of the Devil,* which is the successful struggle of an illiterate western girl for the social graces needful in winning back her husband from a cultured siren.

Then came the war, and Mrs. Atherton was in her element. Her activities in France won her the Legion of Honor; she wrote copious and vivid descriptions of all she did and saw; and at the beginning of 1918 she published *The White Morning,* a reasonably accurate forecast of the German revolution. In the intervals she found time to dash off two mystery novels in a wholly new vein.

After the war her fame suffered a temporary eclipse. Injudiciously, she tried to recapture the first fine careless rapture of her earlier successes. *The Sisters-in-law* (1921) started where *Ancestors* left off, at the San Francisco earthquake, and depicted the battle

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of a married woman and a spinster for the same man; *Sleeping Fires* (1922) went back to the theme of dipsomania which had caused such a hullabaloo over *A Daughter of The Vine*. Alas, times had changed—very largely owing to the success of Mrs. Atherton's own evangelizing—and when the reviewers rallied with the old war-cries of "crude . . . vulgar . . . sordid", the public was not titillated. Worst of all, one critic said that *Sleeping Fires* was "old-fashioned . . . out of date" and "read like a tract".

Mrs. Atherton did not accept her superannuation. Within two years she came out with *Black Oxen* and heard the old-time uproar in all its frenzy. The only difference was that many influential critics were approbatory, and the shrieks of horror were feeble by comparison with the cheers. The generation of her grandchildren, which had never heard of Hermia Suydam or Patience Sparhawk, took Countess Zattiany to its impulsive bosom. And yet Mrs. Atherton had simply pulled once again the old ruse which served her so often. Just as Mme Blavatsky was the fashionable fakir of 1888, so was Dr. Steinach the fashionable fakir of 1923; in each instance Mrs. Atherton saw her opportunity and beat the others to it with a book. *The Crystal Cup* was a companion volume, with the lingo of Freud and Jung replacing that of the rejuvenators, and again the virtuous read it attentively, picked it up with a pair of tongs and put it in the furnace.

Having proved that she could lick the post-war generation on its own ground, she looked about for fresh conquests. A chance remark about Aspasia gave her a clue and, quite independently of Mr. Erskine, she got the notion that the celebrities of the ancient world were human beings after all. Utterly unconcerned by her inability to read a word of Greek, she made a flying trip to Athens, shut herself up with all the available books on the subject, and then wrote *The Immortal Marriage* and *The Jealous Gods,* which such pundits as Professors Paul Shorey and Maurice Hutton pronounce unrivalled interpretations of the Periclean Age, and in which Socrates, Aspasia, Alcibiades and the rest show their kinship to modern men and women without recourse to slang and wisecracks. That she was not absorbed in Ancient Greece, however, to the total exclusion of active life, was proved when she was one of the hardest workers in the presidential campaign of Governor Smith.

Through all her diversity of theme and method, certain elements of Mrs. Atherton's mind emerge as permanent and significant. One of the most striking is her devotion to aristocracy—not necessarily when indicated by hereditary rank but always when involving contempt of the bourgeoisie. Her ideal in America is the Old South and its kindred in the élite of San Francisco; she is chilly toward New England, supercilious to the promiscuity of Washington and has unqualified detestation for the Middle West. It was this predilection which inflamed her hatred of the popular press, made her at home in Europe and aroused her to hero-worship of Alexander Hamilton. This alone can explain how she could have divided her affection last year equally between Pericles and Al Smith.

Another permanent trait has been her devotion to the independence of her sex. Practically every one of her novels centers upon a woman who claims the right to think and act for herself, to play a part in the political and intellectual world and to be no more ashamed of her sexual impulses than men are. The propagandist is clearly perceptible when one looks back at the procession of superwomen that Mrs. Atherton has created. They defy convention and environment: Hermia Suydam, the ugly woman who made herself beautiful; Lee Tarleton, the shy San Francisco girl who made herself an English countess; Betty Madison, the social butterfly who made herself a political power; Ida Compton, the gum-chewing Montana hoyden who made herself refined; Marie Zattiany, the old woman who made herself

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young—these are striking examples; but all her other heroines, from Helena Belmont, the Californian heiress, to Aspasia, the Athenian hetæra, are alike in their ability to discuss intellectual questions brilliantly, in their strength of will and indulgence of their impulses, and in the inevitable problem of reconciling sex with brain and opposing the traditional superiority of the male.

Her third preoccupation is with the relationship of the United States and Europe. The impact of an American on the foreign scene, or of a European on this country, is one of her favorite themes, and she analyzes thoroughly the aspects of national character thus revealed. In this, of course, she is a disciple of Henry James, and she has repeatedly acknowledged it, but it must be remembered that when she began to write he was practically unknown to the general public of his own country and that even her earliest novels had a wider circulation than any of his. His other apostle, Mrs. Wharton, did not publish her first book till ten years after Mrs. Atherton, and she was not widely recognized for several years. A considerable number of earlier American authors had laid their stories in Europe, but they did so exactly as they would have laid them in fairyland; so far as the average reader was concerned, Gertrude Atherton was the first to suggest that the United States and Europe are on the same planet.

In these various respects, she has done much to broaden the literary horizon of her compatriots; perhaps to her, more than to any other single person, may be attributed the spade-work which gradually began to eradicate some of the provincialism and prudery from the American reading public. In a letter to *The Critic* in 1893 on "The Young Person as a Novel-Reader", she expressed her contempt for maudlin squeamishness:

> Mr. Henry James revealed his bitterness of spirit against the thralldom of the Young Person several years ago; and he is neither the first nor the last novelist of unimpeachable respectability and predominant spirituality who has been something more than restive under the yoke of the Young Person.
>
> As far as my own observation goes, the parent is over-anxious and the novelist exaggerates his power of evil. I do not believe the girl was ever born who could be corrupted by a work of fiction which was at the same time a work of art, no matter what its theme. She must have knowledge presented to her in concrete images and uncompromising text-book parlance before the delicate analysis or impressionist pictures of the artist can be anything but words to her. When I was fifteen, and given to exploring the shelves of my grandfather's library, I came across a little black, mysterious-looking volume, whose yellow leaves were spotted, and whose gilded title was almost gone. The title had been *Boccaccio's Decameron,* however, and the book was promptly confiscated and hidden. I as promptly set to work to find it, and when I had done so I read it from cover to cover, much bored, and not able to see, for the life of me, why I should have been put to so much unnecessary trouble. And I was not a backward child in other respects, nor can the "Decameron" be said to handle its favorite topic with gloves; there is not a modern author of the first class who would not, in making a comparatively faithful translation, so bring to bear all his nice knowledge of English words and infinite subtlety of expression that the ignorant girl of fifteen would be more mystified than ever.
>
> On the other hand, the Young Person of enlightened mind is not in the way of being hurt by the artist in letters, for she has a fine scorn of anything short of the worst class of French novels that find their way into translation.

In spite of this crusading, it was many years before Mrs. Atherton's books ceased to be assailed for their pernicious effect on youth.

Furthermore, she was the first popular novelist of America to essay the new modes which were being developed for the novel abroad, particularly the naturalism prevalent in France. Her special hero was Bourget, whom she praised in various dedications and reviews, and she took inspiration from his methods. What she lacked in finesse she made up in persistence and vigor.

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Since her success has always been achieved in the face of critical opposition—perhaps largely because of it—one is curious to discover how she could provoke such enduring animosity. The indictment may be considered as resting upon three counts, moral, ethical, and technical.

The moral accusations have already been sufficiently indicated in the discussion of the individual novels and their reception. Again and again it was asserted that she dwelt unduly on the sensual or animal side of sex; that she put lewd and subversive theories into the mouths of her protagonists, chiefly the feminine ones; and that she appeared to condone their indecent opinions. Even an academic interest in free love was anathema; the sins of Helena Belmont in trying to make a man marry her, instead of the insipid maiden he was engaged to, and of Betty Madison in merely thinking how nice it would be to be loved by an elderly senator with a wife in existence, brought the books under ban; and as for such creatures as Hermia Suydam and Patience Sparhawk! . . .

The attack on her ethics was focussed chiefly upon patriotism. It was held that she gave a criminally false and unjust picture of her own country, which was accepted as valid by her numerous readers abroad. The editor of *The Critic* complained in 1897:

> The only writers whom English critics seem to consider typically American are Mrs. Atherton and Mr. Stephen Crane. I think that these papers take delight in picking out our most commonplace, vulgar books to praise for their "Americanism." They call them "racy"—in other words, they only care for things American when they are "freakish".

Thus Mrs. Atherton was condemned for being popular abroad, when her work did not conform closely enough to the provincial American standards to be acceptable as representative. Specifically, her stories which included American scenes or characters gave the impression that the average American woman was undisciplined and erotic and that the average American man was bestial and brainless, implications which her compatriots strongly resented.

Finally, the critics united to disparage her literary style. From first book to last, she has been told that she cannot construct a sentence, that she uses words with violent inappropriateness and exaggeration, that her figures of speech are absurd and her conversations wooden, that the construction of her plots is arbitrary and unwieldy. The earlier books were especially guilty of verbal violences: the critics made endless game of Carmelita Murietta's "loud ecstatic cry like the lioness who has found her mate", and of the hero and heroine of *A Question of Time,* he with "warm tremendous lips" and a nose which "although large was delicate as a lancet, and had nostrils so thin and flexible that when they were not quivering like the wings of a captured bird they lay limply against the septum", and she with a "pink mouth like a bursting azalea", while "in her clear blue eyes were little yellow specks; they were like lakes lying calmly above golden sand and covered with a thin layer of ice". Mrs. Atherton gradually modified these exuberances, and her later style frequently achieves apt and original images; but she is always guilty of startling lapses into awkwardness or absurdity. For example, in *Senator North* she wrote, "in ordinary conditions politics are barely mentioned when the most political city in the world is in evening dress, but war is a microbe"; and in *The Travelling Thirds* (1905) there is a heroine whose "claim to distinction was in her grooming, her beauty mien", who "moved her head slowly on the long column of her throat" and who, after a silence, "emerged from her centres".

The more general accusations against her style may be illustrated with a few citations. The short stories collected as *The Bell in the Fog* (1905) were called "good raw material which the author seems not to have had the art to develop. Without a sense of form, which, with all her ability, Mrs. Atherton

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conspicuously lacks, it is perhaps as easy to write a good short story as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The method is careless, there is no delicacy of touch, and the dialogue is preposterous". Of *Ancestors,* the reviewer in *The Independent* said:

> Mrs. Atherton's literary style is improving. She does not give the impression she once did of walking about in her own story with a horse whip in her hand ready for the timid critics. She does not hector so fiercely; the contrast between English and Americans is shrewdly drawn and as lacking in kindness as one may expect from an author who places wit before humor, and who is incapable of understanding the pathos of being human.

Of the same book, however, *The Nation* remarked:

> That her manner at times is somewhat rough cannot be denied. Thoughtful she is, and in a way penetrating, though quite without subtlety and grasping things more violently than is always to the taste of the over-sensitive.

And *The Dial* agreed:

> The story is made fairly tedious by endless passages of analysis and discussion, and its inordinate length is not justified by a corresponding richness of invention and imagination. Its style exhibits rawness rather than refinement, and is almost wholly devoid of charm.

Two years later the same reviewer summed up the objections, *à propos* of *Tower of Ivory:*

> Her style is as stodgy as ever, her passages of analysis and description are terribly long-winded, she has hardly the faintest gleam of humor, her social commentary is too acrid to arouse sympathy, and the garish coloring of Ouida is irresistibly suggested by her more ambitious pages.

Echoes of similar groans mingle with the plaudits of her latest books. The quality which sustained her novels through such bombardments can best be described as "melodramatic realism". She was influenced by the realistic movement to the extent of analyzing psychological motives, relating her characters to the life and ideas of their era, and frequenting the more sordid, unheroic back-alleys of life avoided by the squeamish. On the other hand, she kept clear of the drab monotony and commonplace detail which stifle so many realistic novels and, instead, seasoned her concoctions liberally with suicides and other varieties of sudden death, and with a generous assortment of vehement love-scenes. All her effects are achieved by the startling emphasis and contrasts of the poster-artist. She once put a significant remark into the mouth of one of her heroes, who cried out in scorn against fame, "that rescues a Jane Austen and passes an Emily Brontë by!" Unquestionably it is the extravagant passions of *Wuthering Heights* rather than the sedate ironies of *Pride and Prejudice* that Mrs. Atherton takes for her literary ideal. As a result, she has provided the reading public with a compromise which exactly suits its needs. The stratum which has acquired enough intellectual snobbery to be contemptuous of Edgar Rice Burroughs, but cannot palate the refinements of Henry James, finds in her just what it wants; the spiciness and melodrama gratify their unregenerate impulses, and the discussion of theories and analysis of psychology make them feel that they are in the realm of the highbrow. There is a sufficient justification of Mrs. Atherton's strident manner in the fact that nothing of a mellower tone could have aroused even a semblance of independent thinking on the part of her readers. By being indomitably strenuous and tough-minded, she has held the nose of her readers to the grindstone of contemporary problems. She will probably live in American literature as H. G. Wells in English, as the most responsive receiving-set for the predominant waves of popular intellection throughout her era.

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SIX MEXICAN POEMS

by Witter Bynner

A MEXICAN WIND

Out of nowhere it came and tipped the lake at our boat,
Darkening all around us like a doom,
So that we put for shore and climbed, through flowers,
A hill of trees where a thatch-roof shed the rain.
We crawled inside. We wondered about scorpions.
A burro made room and wondered about us,
Whose lips could laugh and sing a Mexican song
And yet whose hearts were somehow very strange.

A BEAUTIFUL MEXICAN

There where she sips her wine, her copper brow
Is itself the sunset. Her eyes are lifted now,
Her eyes are evening stars. I have seen many
Chapala sunsets—but never before have I seen one
Come down from the mountain to be a beautiful woman,
To shadow a table with a dusk of light
From a bare arm and then, alas, to rise
And turn and go, leaving a sudden darkness.

FROM CHAPALA TO A SAN FRANCISCAN

There came no radiance from the setting sun
But only grayness, till it was surely night.
Then where the sun had darkened on the mountain
Above the lake, a great flush opened and closed.
Now layers of cloud gather against the moon.
And yet the moonlight on this Aztec hill
So binds the world that I can almost see
Mount Tamalpais and the Golden Gate.

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THE CROSS ON TUNAPEC

These cobbles toward the foot of Tunapec
Lead from Chapala to a pyramid.
Whether this hill was shaped for the sun and moon
By Aztec builders or Chapala came
And knelt by a natural altar-stone,
There are cactus for the foot now, brambles for the hand,
And on the top the black and bloody knife
Is a crucifixion hung with paper flowers.

CONFLICT

The day we crossed the lake, the day that death
Confused the sun in San Luis Soyatlan
With a sudden conflict in the afternoon
Between the spark of rifles and of life,
We left three horsemen who had sat erect
A moment since and we faced over the water
The everlasting bubble of the earth,
Its hollow filled with a rainbow breath of mountains.

THE WEB

I am caught in an iridescent spider-web,
One end of it attached to a pepper-tree
And the other to a weed on Tunapec.
Why should I break the pattern of the world?
Better to swing so delicately caught
Than to have my eyes put out in hollow flame.
I flutter my wings a while and then subside,
Till a shadow shall find me in the evening wind.

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THE PURPLE COW PERIOD

THE "DINKEY MAGAZINES" THAT CAUGHT THE SPIRIT OF THE 'NINETIES

by Claude Bragdon

THE Purple Cow Period of American letters is synchronous with *The Yellow Book* Period in England, that is, it corresponds to what is now referred to jeeringly by the Younger Generation as "The Gay 'Nineties". And in sober truth this is not such a bad title, for the most characteristic literary products of that particular decade were inspired far more by the play-spirit than those of today. The era found perhaps its most acute expression in certain periodically issued, small, and for the most part short-lived, brochures or broadsides referred to in the slang of the day as the Dinkey Magazines, each of which expressed the attitude and point of view of an individual or of a group. In the aggregate they can be characterized as "young", devouringly egocentric and self-assertive and either good-naturedly or bitterly critical of one another. They constituted a sort of metaphysical Fleet Street, extending from coast to coast.

Of these magazines *The Lark, The Chap Book* and *The Philistine* were perhaps the most outstanding. *The Lark,* launched by Gelett Burgess, Bruce Porter, Ernest Peixotto and other talented young San Franciscans, was easily the most original and brilliant of the lot, and its fame spread around the literary world by reason of that piece of pure nonsense, "The Purple Cow", which Burgess contributed—picture and verse—to the very first number:

I never saw a purple cow,
I never hope to see one,
But I can tell you anyhow
I'd rather see than be one.

This quatrain, followed by others in the same strain of irresponsible nonsense, was worn so threadbare by continual reference and quotation, that Burgess supplemented it a year or so later with this valedictory:

Ah yes, I wrote The Purple Cow,
I'm sorry now I wrote it,
But I can tell you anyhow,
I'll kill you if you quote it!

Another of these engaging whimsies, illustrated as they all were by humorous line-drawings, went as follows:

My feet they haul me round the house,
They hoist me up the stairs,
I only have to steer them
And they rides me everywheres.

We were always out for one another's scalp in those days, even when friendly Indians, and this quatrain I paraphrased in *The Philistine* with a burlesque Burgess drawing and under it the legend:

When I draw pictures for *The Shark*
I do not have to think;
I let my fingers chase my pen
And my pen chase the ink.

My first encounter with Burgess took place in the office of the art editor of *Harper's*

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Magazine. I had just made a poster for Du Maurier's *The Martian* which had a purple-violet sky for a background, and an obvious association of ideas prompted the editor to remark, "Wouldn't you like to meet the author of The Purple Cow? He's right in the next room". So presently I was introduced to just such a saturnine and sad-looking individual as would fulfill the popular ideal of a professional humorist, in which the clown-with-a-breaking-heart tradition is deeply ingrained. We became fast friends from that hour, and it is to Burgess that I owe my first initiation into the mysteries of that fairyland of mathematics, the Fourth Dimension of Space, for, like Lewis Carroll, his mind is preëminently mathematical. Incidentally, it might be added, he had been educated to the profession of engineering.

Since that time Burgess has put away the gay humors of his *Lark* period, though some of them still survive in his books for children, but in his younger days he delighted to "put an antic disposition on" to the bewilderment of strangers and to the delight of his friends. One night, while we were coming away from a particularly dull and bromidic dinner given and attended by "society's true ornaments", he exclaimed, "Claude, this is one of those evenings when I wanted to tip over the lamp!" When I asked him what he meant, he answered, in effect, "Why, everyone was just bound up, tied hand and foot, by convention: no one permitted his reality to peer out even for a moment. Now if I had only tipped over the lamp it would have released us all: each would have shown himself in his true character by his reactions, whether of indignation, fear, heroism or what not. I was just as bad as the rest of them because I lacked the necessary courage. To be sure I might have burned up the table-spread, and I would never have been invited again, but at least we would have had a moment of excitement, we would have had the taste of reality—of life".

To get the "bite" out of each moment and to provoke others to do the same—this was Burgess's particular preoccupation at the time I knew him best. I could give countless examples of his whimsical humors. One night at a party in a New York apartment he sat down at a desk and wrote a letter, addressed the envelope, affixed a stamp, and then opened the window and threw it out. When asked why he had done such a ridiculous thing he answered nonchalantly, "Oh, some fool is sure to come along and pick it up and put it in the nearest post-box!" This proved him to be a practical psychologist, for the letter reached its destination, just as he said it would. He capitalized his knowledge of human nature to a much more profitable tune on his first visit to England, when his vogue was at its height. What he did was to borrow six hundred dollars and invest it all in the most faultlessly fashionable London clothes that he could buy. So accoutred, he visited the editors of all the magazines for which he was ambitious to write and talked of nothing but the dinners and receptions to which he had been invited and the noble lords and ladies it had been his privilege to meet, representing that he was in London merely for pleasure, with no idea of making money by his pen. He had accurately gauged the depth of English snobism: the scheme worked to a charm and he ended by being implored (and even competed for) to write those contributions upon the acceptance of which his very existence in England had to depend.

The Chap Book started as what would be called today a house organ, that is, it was a side line enterprise of Stone and Kimball, Chicago book publishers. Herbert Stuart Stone and Ingalls Kimball were Harvard graduates with leanings toward literature and the fine arts, and they decided to try to bring more of both into the business of publishing. As they were highly intelligent, sufficiently rich and excellently well connected they met with a certain measure of success in this endeavor. On their list of authors they

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had Stevenson, Henry James, Verlaine, Maeterlinck, Santayana and others scarcely less distinguished, and they raised the standard of commercial book printing and binding from a low level to one which has not been surpassed since.

During their régime the poster art in America entered its first and most brilliant phase, inaugurated by Edward Penfield's revolutionary and beautiful series of posters advertising *Harper's Magazine*. Stone and Kimball followed suit with a number of *Chap Book* posters by Will Bradley, Frank Hazenplug and myself. We also designed their bindings and contributed drawings to their little magazine. I have the first bound volume before me now: the rubricated title page, with its quaintly set and curiously worded subtitle and its imitation old woodcut representation of an Eighteenth Century dandy with stick, stock and monocle, is as humorous and elegant a piece of typography as one could wish. Aubrey Beardsley never made a more decorative drawing than his illustration of Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death" here first published. Meteyard's title page drawing for "The Ebb Tide", in point of pure design, puts the book jackets of today to shame. Bertram Goodhue, Eugene Grasset and Charles Ricketts are also represented by drawings. The letterpress is no less distinguished: among the poets who contribute are Bliss Carman, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Richard Hovey, William Vaughn Moody, William Sharp, Louise Chandler Moulton, Josephine Preston Peabody and Paul Verlaine, and among the contributors of prose Alice Brown, Anatole France, Louise Imogen Guiney, Pierre La Rose and Richard Henry Stoddard. Of the "Notes" in each number, written or collected by Bliss Carman who was the editor, the following is an example:

No wonder that science and learning profound
In Oxford and Cambridge so greatly abound,
When so many take thither a little each day,
And we see very few who take any away.

In 1895, during my *Wanderjahr,* I encountered Stone in London and I went to live in a quaint little old hotel in Portman Place where he and some of his friends were staying—one of those hotels where the night porter hands each guest a lighted candle in a pewter candlestick to go to bed by. They all dressed for dinner every night, ordered their waistcoats by the dozen, went to parties and the opera, slept late, breakfasted in bed on toast, tea and fresh strawberries, beginning their day at about the time when I, who had risen early and breakfasted frugally, was finishing my task of making measured drawings at the South Kensington Museum. Returning thence on top of a bus, I would sometimes catch a glimpse of Stone through a Piccadilly club window. This symbolizes the social and economic gulf which yawned between us, easily bridged, however, by Stone's truly democratic spirit and our genuine regard for one another. His acceptance of a drawing of mine for publication in *The Chap Book* was the first recognition of that sort received by me from any source.

The Philistine was entirely different both from *The Chap Book* and *The Lark*. It made no pretense to beauty of typography and the cover of coarse paper was of the same particularly ugly brownish green color as present-day army uniforms. It was the speaking-trumpet, so to speak, of Elbert Hubbard—"Fra Elbertus"—pungent, abusive, witty, knowing, vulgar. Hubbard apparently dramatized himself as a sort of composite of Ralph Waldo Emerson and William Morris, but his chief claim to fame is that of being the Father of Modern Advertising. He had a perfect genius for publicity, smoking up other people's talents and throwing them away like a daily newspaper, accomplishing a considerable amount of good in the process, for to his vast clientele he sustained something of the relation of Chautauqua, disseminating about as rich a brand of "culturine" as the middle-class American stomach was able to stand.

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Hubbard's now historic dinner tendered to Stephen Crane, whose star was just then rising above the horizon, provides a perfect example of his method of getting publicity for himself by means of others. I do not impeach Hubbard's sincerity: he admired Crane's talent as sincerely as a lover the woman he desires, but that dinner, held in a private room of a Buffalo hotel, is still a distressing memory—like the sight of a young ox led to the slaughter. At first the dinner was dominated by a lot of drunken pseudo-reporters, who had come there with the evident intention of turning the whole affair to ridicule by their ribald and irrelevant interruptions, much to the distress, naturally, of Hubbard and us others. When these men were finally cowed into some semblance of order Crane was forced to his feet to respond to Harry P. Taber's tribute to "the strong voice now heard in America—the voice of Stephen Crane". What he said and the impression he made were thus succinctly reported in the *Buffalo News* the following morning:

> Mr. Crane responded modestly and gracefully, saying he was a working newspaper man who was trying to do what he could "since he had recovered from college" with the machinery which had come into his hands—doing it sincerely, if clumsily, and simply setting forth in his own way his own impressions. He is a young fellow—twenty-four—with a smooth face and a keen eye and doesn't take himself over seriously.

Since its recession so far into the past, perhaps I am inclined to romanticize The Purple Cow Period of American letters, wherein I used to be referred to as "the Beardsley of America". Nevertheless, I cannot but think that it contained something precious which was later lost. William Dean Howells was its most eminent figure; *A Message to Garcia* was acclaimed as a masterpiece; people were persuaded by thousands to believe that there was nothing to choose between a limp-leather Roycroft *Little Journeys* and a Kelmscott *Chaucer*. It was the time when the Gibson Girl put her mint mark on the imagination of all adolescent youths; when Richard Harding Davis was read by multitudes of nubile maidens with accelerated heart beats and retarded breath. New York was brownstone, and the *Century Magazine*—not a Reuben sandwich—was a national institution. It was the Age of Innocence, and it was Golden—before the sinking of the *Titanic* and Armageddon inaugurated The Great Distrust.

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MATTHEW ARNOLD'S ESSAY ON WORDSWORTH

by Lane Cooper

'Glory,' said M. Renan the other day, 'glory after all is the thing which has the best chance of not being altogether vanity.'" Thus is a great French witness cited by Matthew Arnold in the *causerie* which is now the *Preface* to his selections from Wordsworth in the *Golden Treasury Series*. But I quote from the essay as it first appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for July, 1879. There, after a lively digression on Renan, which was soon excised, Arnold makes the familiar application: "Wordsworth was a homely man, and would certainly never have thought of talking of glory as that which, after all, has the best chance of not being altogether vanity".

Besides glory, Arnold received good pay for his article of July, 1879. And in September it reappeared, judiciously amended, in the *Golden Treasury*. This volume, *Poems of Wordsworth,* must have sold extremely well, for in November it was reissued; there was no further change in the *Preface* but, now and later, several pieces were added to the selections and a few disappeared. Of these last, oddly enough, the first lines did not all disappear betimes from the index; at least four remained in 1900. Even to-day, in the twenty-eighth reprinting since the editor died, we are referred on page 329 to a poem on page 221 which is not there. The issue of November, 1879, was reprinted in 1880 and 1882, with additions in 1886 and with slight alterations in 1888, the year of Arnold's death. For some nine years "poor Matthew" could have supplied himself well with shoestrings from his share of the sales in this venture. He had himself heard Wordsworth say that, "for he knew not how many years, his poetry had never brought him in enough to buy his shoestrings". Arnold's chat begins auspiciously by recalling what the opulent Macaulay had said of Wordsworth—how easy it would have been to raise money in his honor at the time of his death.

I come back from the talk of money and Macaulay, of sales and shoestrings, which fills my second paragraph and the first two of Arnold's essay—I come back, as Arnold says, "to M. Renan's praise of glory, from which I started", and to the homely Wordsworth. Is it true that Wordsworth did not think or talk of glory or did not value it aright? It is not. The reverse is true. For his prose, we need only look at his estimate of national glory in *The Convention of Cintra*. In his verse, he mentions *glory* more often by a third than does Shakespeare and five times as often as the homely but, on occasion, "glorious" Burns. If figures be allowed, Wordsworth in his poems talks of *renown* nine times (as, "O genuine glory, pure renown!") and of *fame* forty-eight times, "true fame", "spurious fame and shortlived praise" and so on. And he uses the word, *glory,* one hundred and thirty-three times; often, of course, in reference to the glory of a flower or of the heavens, but often enough with re-

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gard to his art, and even with a personal reference, thus:

> But to my conscious soul I now can say,
> "I recognize thy glory."

Popular applause and the fame that can be measured by sales, he clearly rated lower than does Arnold, who at least does not forget them. But what of that lofty verdict, which Arnold thinks a Goethe could render for the confederate critical opinion of modern Europe, on the mastery by a poet of his art? Even that amphictyonic verdict would fall below Wordsworth's high concept of enduring earthly fame. He sings, with Milton:

> Fit audience let me find, though few.

Arnold's select audience of Stoics and Epicureans, who are to establish the reputation of the modern poet, never would content either Wordsworth or Milton in so far as their poetry is Christian. And higher than any earthly tribunal is the divine witness to human glory, that tribunal of last appeal for Lycidas and the Happy Warrior. Here we are in a realm of Miltonic and Wordsworthian faith with which Arnold is unsympathetic.

It is a sound principle to let a poet be his own interpreter. But we see that Arnold can make a statement about Wordsworth and glory without noting the references to fame and glory even in the selections he has made for his own small volume. There is much else that is unsympathetic in the essay, much that is misleading, and something that is even false. If there is no little good, and if the volume brought many to read Wordsworth as Arnold would have them, that is not enough. The time has come when we should cease to think of this essay as the final utterance which it affects to be. My present aim, while constructive, I hope, with regard to Wordsworth, is frankly destructive of Arnold. Accordingly, after praising the essay a little, I shall proceed to censure it.

In this essay Arnold, as usual, is lucid. He is lucid in his diction, sure and simple in detail, orderly and clear in the general march of his thought. His article in *Macmillan's Magazine* was not lacking in these qualities; his changes and excisions from that article are a lesson in the craft of prose. Further, for the critical standards upon which he builds, he shrewdly employs witnesses: Macaulay, Renan, Goethe and himself, the Arnold who had written well on Homer. Again, with an effect of perspective, he compares Wordsworth with contemporary English poets and then, clearly, if less precisely, with the English poets from Spenser down, with the German poets from Klopstock down, with the modern Italian poets down to Leopardi, and with the French poets from Molière to Victor Hugo. His perspective seems large and luminous. Like a careful husbandman, he sows illustrative passages with the hand, not from the sack. In quoting from Wordsworth, as in choosing poems for the volume, a poetic insight tends to save him from errors of commission. His illuminating humor, too, is well displayed. In his serious vein he rightly dwells upon that healing virtue in Wordsworth which John Stuart Mill also attested. He is at his best in touching on such "moral ideas" of Wordsworth as he approves; in discussing this universal element as poetry, he quietly borrows from the master of them that know. To mention Aristotle openly might have defeated his purpose. I could say more in praise of the essay, but there ends my necessary praise.

For censure we may first note some errors committed. When Wordsworth died in April, 1850, Arnold had been quick enough with his *Memorial Verses,* apparently written near the time of the poet's burial. But now, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for 1879, the year of the poet's death is misdated as 1852. The mistake, though promptly rectified in the *Golden Treasury,* does not evince solicitude in the critic. Indeed, the *Memorial Verses* themselves, while reverent, linked Wordsworth only with Goethe and Byron, probably

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the two poets of his day with whom he would least care to be linked in a threnody.

Again, the original essay drags in casual matter on Renan, Victor Hugo and Goethe that is wisely curtailed in the *Preface*. But the foreign strands remain. When compared, the two versions betray the alien nature of the standards and witnesses Arnold appeals to and their essential remoteness from the English poet.

As a positive flaw, however, much more serious is the arbitrary treatment of the text in Arnold's selections. In the *Preface* he says: "I have not ventured . . . on giving any piece otherwise than as Wordsworth himself gave it". But the statement is not true. Arnold has neglected the best text of Wordsworth's poems as their author finally gave them to the world in 1845 and 1849-50; he has violated a principle recognized by all sound editors as binding, and one that was so recognized by Wordsworth, who in 1830 wrote to Alexander Dyce:

> You know what importance I attach to following strictly the last copy of the text of an author.

In the previous year he had written:

> I know not what to say about my intended edition of a portion of Thomson. There appears to be some indelicacy in one poet treating another in that way.

Arnold was not so delicate, according to the gentle Edward Dowden:

> Matthew Arnold's choice of poems was excellent; his choice of a text was not judicious; probably his own early associations of pleasure were with that inferior text. In some instances he did what was illegitimate—he silently manufactured a text of his own, such as Wordsworth had never sanctioned or seen, by piecing together readings from more editions than one.

Let us add that Dowden's selections in the *Athenæum Press Series* are better than Arnold's, as his *Introduction* is better than Arnold's *Preface;* and his text is authentic.

I submit that Arnold's illegitimate procedure, in textual criticism and in naming poems as their author did not wish to name them, raises a presumption against his critical method as a whole. The critic who is unsound in constructing a text will be suspect in allied activities whether of interpretation or criticism. He will be suspect in his judgment of the individuality of his author, in his estimate of that author with respect to time and circumstance and in his opinion of the types of poetry which that author essayed. Thus Arnold's essay is misleading on Wordsworth's individual style. At his best, we read:

> Nature herself seems . . . to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power.

From this and other judgments we should infer, wrongly, that the poet was a very unsuccessful critic of his own work. But aside from the passages for which Arnold took the pen out of Wordsworth's hand, to concoct for him a garbled and inferior text, there was ample evidence before 1879, indeed, before and after 1845, that Wordsworth was a tireless and adroit improver of his art. Further, the essay gives no hint of the noble style ornate in *Waterfowl* or in *The White Doe of Rylstone*. The latter piece is not mentioned by Arnold, though its strength and elaborate beauty, in a sustained effort, win for it a place among the very noblest works of its author. This more elaborate style, with its haunting beauty, is often found in Wordsworth's later poems; for example, in "Ethereal Minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!" which was written in 1825 and is included in Arnold's selections.

We must pass over considerations of time and circumstance briefly. Arnold says what has since been repeated, that almost all of Wordsworth's best work was produced in the decade between 1798 and 1808; the second date seems to be a mistaken allusion to Wordsworth's two volumes of 1807, after

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which there was a lull in his publication of verse. Is it not strange, then, to find that a third of Arnold's selections are from work produced thereafter, some of it as late as 1835 and 1840? It is true, the great task of Wordsworth in his later years was the improvement of work that he did in his prime; and true that his power was hurt by the death of two of his children in 1812. *The Excursion,* published in 1814, caused him grievous labor. But he still had poetic energy in 1820-21; Arnold's volume includes four of the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets,* though the series is belittled in the essay. Wordsworth was then about fifty-one years old; he was over sixty when he added two lines, in *The Prelude,* on the statue of Newton:

> The marble index of a mind for ever
> Voyaging through strange seas of thought, alone . . .

where the subject rises, according to Arnold, *On Translating Homer,* and the poet rises with it. Most men do their chief constructive work before the age of forty-five or fifty. Shakespeare did so, and Dante and Virgil. Virgil also gave his latter years to the perfecting of a labor that was shaped in his prime. Why should Wordsworth be thought exceptional?

But Arnold thinks that Wordsworth never had, like Milton, a secure hold upon style. Now we may go far with him in lauding Milton's style, yet not to the point of thinking that Milton never lost his grip on it. Dryden, who had worked through *Paradise Lost* with singular care for *The State of Innocence,* charges Milton with running "into a flat thought, sometimes for a hundred lines together". This, too, sounds like an exaggeration; yet where, in all the verse that Wordsworth printed is there writing as slipshod as lines 41-46 in Book 9 of *Paradise Lost?* For that matter, I challenge any one to find a solecism in Wordsworth's prose or verse to match the plural verb "fill" which has stood in Arnold's essay from July, 1879, to this hour: "Now a drama or an epic fill the mind".

Having brought the alleged flat thoughts of Wordsworth into undue prominence, Arnold says that Wordsworth needs to be relieved of his "poetical baggage". What poet does not? How (for such is the inference) is Wordsworth exceptional in this? Sophocles needed the relief that was given him by the Alexandrian critics; we think the better of him with less than a tenth of his plays. Would not Shakespeare stand better two thousand years from now without *Titus Andronicus, All's Well that Ends Well* and the fourth act of *Macbeth?* What of the voluminous Browning? And is the inferior work of Wordsworth as poor as the inferior work of Burns? There are more substance and more art in it.

With regard to literary species, Arnold quarrels with Wordsworth's arrangement of his poems. The Greeks, Arnold contends, understood the division of poetry into types and their divisions must still be followed. But why? Have Christianity, the Troubadours and the Germanic poets neither increased nor altered the ancient types? However, Arnold does not classify his selections by the method he recommends; indeed, it could not be done. Nor does he use or mention the later, and more workable, divisions of the Greek Anthology. Rather, if we allow for omissions, to a surprising extent he follows Wordsworth's own arrangement; above all, where it mainly counts, in the sequence of individual poems. Therein he was wise, for the best editors have preserved that arrangement, and the worst have not. We do well to reflect that Wordsworth's ordering of his poems was done by an effective artist in landscape.

The Prelude Arnold puts on a level with *The Excursion,* though the former was written within the golden decade of 1798-1808. *Vaudracour and Julia,* which he says he cannot read, was, we know, detached from *The Prelude,* and we now know why. The story

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was too close to the facts of Wordsworth's own hidden romance; even the name, Vaudracour, is an imitation of his surname. Sainte-Beuve, who learned the secret of Wordsworth's life in France, could have read this poem with sympathetic insight. In our day, Harper and Legouis have read it with interest enough. Nevertheless, Arnold in his selections from both *Prelude* and *Excursion* has mainly followed the poet's own leading. From *The Prelude* alone Wordsworth could have excerpted a larger body of his finer work than Arnold has garnered in his volume. As for *The Excursion,* there were early interchanges between it and the autobiographical *Prelude*. The essay treats it as an epic poem, decrying its philosophy. It is, however, a dialogue and, as such, compares well with other native specimens, for the type has not flourished in England. *The Excursion,* a favorite with Lamb, who was a sounder critic than Arnold, is not all made up of lyrical bursts and should not be; nor do the Dialogues of Plato move steadily on the level of the poetic myth.

When relieved of his "poetical baggage", Wordsworth rises, according to Arnold, to a place in English literature above Spenser and below only Shakespeare and Milton. "Chaucer is anterior, and on other grounds, too, he cannot well be brought into the comparison." Why not? Spenser is anterior to Milton; the assumption that he is inferior to Wordsworth is very doubtful. But how exclude Chaucer from the fivefold comparison, when Wordsworth studied, modernized and imitated him, and also chose subjects from humble and rustic life?

"When I began to give myself up to the profession of a poet for life," Wordsworth told Crabb Robinson, "I was impressed with a conviction that there were four English poets whom I must have continually before me—Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser and Milton. These I must study, and equal if I could; and I need not think of the rest."

Arnold's perspective embraces the Renaissance, but not Chaucer, and does not, like that of Wordsworth, reach back to Cædmon and Bede. He is not interested in Wordsworth's medievalism. He is not interested, as Sainte-Beuve was, in his Christianity, nor yet in his philosophy. "We cannot do him justice," says Arnold, "until we dismiss his philosophy." Now Arthur Beatty shows that we cannot do the poet justice until we find out what his philosophical connections really were. They do not lie on the surface. Arnold gives no clue to them, nor to the fund, variety and history of Wordsworth's ideas. Arnold's father cherished some of those ideas, but the son makes light of the "Wordsworthians". Still, his selections contain many passages that betray the influence of David Hartley or Wordsworth's early Neoplatonism. Such passages no anthology, from Arnold's day to this, would omit.

Yet we may wonder if the Neoplatonism will always stand so high in comparison with the more distinctly Christian note Sainte-Beuve hears with approval in a sonnet that was written by Wordsworth as early as the year 1802. As Sainte-Beuve intimates, it is hard to write good Christian poetry. It is easier to write Neoplatonic verse that the crowd will enjoy, and Arnold will accept, albeit Wordsworth's Neoplatonism is less effective than Spenser's. However that may be, Wordsworth, like Spenser, ultimately got out of this side-current into the main stream of European poetry which in England, from the beginnings down, has been Christian. With the main stream, Arnold, who leans to Stoicism, and whose longest citation in the essay is from Epictetus, had less in common than his father or that other "Wordsworthian", Dean Stanley.

But Arnold is thought to have had much in common with Sainte-Beuve, to have admired him, learned from him, taken him as the model critic. The essay on Wordsworth obviously is a *causerie* after the fashion of Sainte-Beuve. In it we hear that Wordsworth

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is almost unknown on the Continent. Arnold brightens his page with the glory of eminent Frenchmen who presumably cared not a whit for the "homely" English poet. Yet he does not mention Sainte-Beuve, commonly esteemed to be the great literary critic of recent times, who had read, imitated and translated Wordsworth and whose chance remarks on the poet, though he wrote no *causerie* on him, cut very deep. Arnold's omission of Sainte-Beuve from the group of foreign witnesses is to me the strangest thing about the essay.

In place of Sainte-Beuve stands the great witness Goethe. In *Macmillan's Magazine,* as in the *Preface,* Arnold fails to cite the Sage of Weimar specifically on Wordsworth. He merely quotes an *ipse dixit* of the Sage on the "absurd" *Hernani* of Victor Hugo, adding: "So speaks Goethe, the critic who, above all others may count as European, and whose judgment on the value of a work of poetry is the judgment which will, we may be almost sure, at last prevail generally." Observing that Arnold excised the passage and being almost sure that Wordsworth's not very optimistic opinion of Goethe will at last prevail generally, I wished to know what Goethe actually thought of Wordsworth. So I turned to Bömig's German dissertation, *William Wordsworth in the Judgment of his Time.* And this is what I learned:

> Goethe himself . . . seems not to have read Wordsworth; at all events his works contain not a single opinion about Wordsworth.

Glory, after all, is the thing which has the best chance of not being altogether vanity. What an emptiness there is in the glory Arnold accords to Wordsworth!

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HERMAPHRODITES

by Robert Herrick

"So there are also men who write like women," I said to myself, as I scanned the weekly effusion of a moderately celebrated critic with an accustomed sense of futility in the effort to discover solid ground beneath the surface of his supple phrases, to evoke for my own satisfaction the piece he was supposedly discussing. It couldn't be done! At least, I could not create from so many exquisite words (borrowed from all the arts and a few trades) the plain realities my mind demands. As often these days, I must resign myself to sniffing the agreeable perfume of the words or abandon the thing altogether. I am aware that the critic gets much pleasure out of the weekly display of his *expertise* in saying as nearly nothing as is possible with the flourish of many pretty words, and doubtless some of his readers get a similar pleasure—an exhilaration of thinking they are thinking—perhaps even more than they might derive from the piece itself. . . . Of course, I reflected, such times as these there must be many men who consciously or unconsciously are writing like women. Why not—when sex distinctions are breaking down all around, when the two sexes are becoming functionally merged and confused, so that no longer does the sex denominator in the human fraction mean what it once did, and all generalizations (including my own!) based on sex appear emptier than do most other generalizations? "So like a woman" has long since lost whatever point it may once have had, because, alas, it is also like so many men one knows.

Nevertheless, to my old-fashioned mind there are still distinctions between male and female, even in letters, that should be preserved for the healthy functioning of both sexes.

* * *

I recall a dinner given not so long ago to a visiting Englishwoman, who had written a few talked-about novels and was then engaged in discovering these United States and telling the world what she found here. As she entered the drawing room accompanied by one of our younger writers, I was at once struck by the contrast between the two: the woman large and sturdy, with a dark down on her handsome upper lip, while the man was slight, pale, dapper, the curve of hips being accentuated by the tailoring habit of the day, a little chin fading away from a small mouth. It would not have taken much change in make-up or costume to shift the sexes of the two. The American's voice when he spoke was soft and languid, insinuating and caressing, while the Englishwoman boomed forth her platitudes in serene confidence. The conversation thereafter resolved itself largely into a co-operative exhibition of these two, the visitor trying to sum up all our vagrant culture (as gathered during her six weeks' lecture tour) and the American writer supplying an embroidery of innuendoes and exclamation points. Both toyed with

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phrases which they sought to make realities for the company, although the ideas were apparently *in tenebris*. . . . They were still at it when I left, plucking generalities from thin air. That method is one of the chief marks of the man who writes like a woman. He does not seek to convey a specific thought, a four-square idea, but to create the impression in another's mind of some not quite attained cerebration in his own. This method is not due so much to a lazy habit of mind, or a hazy temperament as to an indirect manner of thinking. We all know the person, male or female, who conducts a discussion as a prosecuting attorney might deal with a dull or reluctant witness, putting his own suggestions adroitly into another's mind. "Only on dark nights like this, wouldn't you say, it is hardly safe to take that road?" . . . "One has the feeling, that something not yet wholly realized exists at least in essence, etc.?" . . . Plainly such minds achieve thought—if it can be called such—by approximations, thrown forth at random on the chance that somewhere, somehow, they will attach themselves to a substance and clinging to its support will start the weaving process of creative thought.

The thing can be done! It is done admirably by the younger women writers of the day and by some of their brothers marked with the feminine character, in poetry perhaps more than in prose, but abundantly in both. Journalistically, such a style is called "suggestive"; in more esthetic circles, "subtle". And few there be who have the rude courage to squeeze this wordy performance tightly and analyze the drippings. . . .

"This is partly a matter of the mind," (I quote almost at random from the critic's article) "in the sense of an overseeing element in which all the parts of a work of art are perceived and given to us in their due relation among themselves, so that the character and meaning of the whole is solidly achieved, etc., etc." Squeeze it and see what you get! Another glance gives: "How bright and delicious Shakespeare can be, so often better—however strong our wills to it—than we could remember!" Delicious! The kitchen commendation might well curdle in the poet's gut. Such an airy condescension is treating him worse than calling him the Bard of Avon.

* * *

There is another type of critic, the table-thumping kind, whose vehement and swiftly changing affirmations exhibit that emotional instability commonly ascribed to women. Each time my eye falls on one of his deliverances—he is a favorite of publishers' jackets—he has discovered a new astounding masterpiece, which can be exalted only by deriding something old. For him literature to be good, like breakfast rolls, must be baked this morning. Conscious that all may not accept his discoveries, he is truculent: he scorns the doubter in advance and covers him with verbal contempt. Criticism for this one seems to be a process of self-intoxication, for which the thing criticized serves merely as a point of departure for his ecstatic fury, as, alas, so often happens in love. "A great book, a rich and wise and beautiful and original and profound and sublime and immensely moving book, etc., etc." What more could one say of God? . . . The still small voice of truth does not penetrate such frenzy, nor the cool glamour of beauty. Heat is the sole medium of his passion and the more he writes—and he is voluble—the more heat he must give off, like a racing motor. He must, I am convinced, be married to a masculine woman; for I explain his vociferations, his frenzies of immediate convictions as due to his struggle to maintain the dominance of the male in a never-ending sex duel. In time his voice will grow less shrill, his truculent ardors fainter, as he loses out in the domestic contest and the woman smoothes him to her uses. He is fighting a losing battle like one slipping in heavy sand, and the daily article he pours forth so hotly is his means of self-defense . . .

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There are other varieties of the man-woman critic, more than I have time to mention. There is the humming-bird critic who pecks here and there capriciously like a woman with a whimsical appetite in a cafeteria, repeating again and again—"So it seems to me". He has much to say about "personality" and "individualism", the self. Does any one who possesses an individuality talk much about it?

* * *

For the perfect example of the man who writes like a woman, however, I must go to England, as for almost every illustration of finish in letters, even today. I select Mr. Aldous Huxley, first, because he writes so well that any woman writer might be proud to be mistaken for him: he has perfected his manner meticulously for a number of years as the American writers of his type have not yet done. And, further, because his most recent novel, *Point Counter Point,* comes so exactly to my purpose. That "slice of life" taken from post-war London begins nowhere and ends nowhere, like so many of the works of the younger writers (as though they felt it necessary to demonstrate the meaninglessness of time and space by giving a microcosm of futility!). Between the first and last pages of this book much is tucked deftly away—caricature, scandal, irony, reflection, stray bits of information, etc. There are many contemporary portraits, some done from life, it is said. This fact, of itself, both interests and intrigues, but above and beyond this, it is essential that the portraits shall have a life of their own—something else than identifiable traits—which in my opinion most of them just miss having. They are keen studies in perversity and stupidity and inanition, very, very clever studies often. But as the characters emerge from Mr. Huxley's caustic phrases they lack that touch of reasonable humanity without which their own mothers would fail to recognize them. They speak the proper idiom; they perform the trivial acts willed for them by their designer; but, like the electrical robots now being perfected by our mechanical geniuses to take the place of human robots, they would not deceive a child, skilful as their simulation of life is.

The women are much more believable and more thoroughly done than the men (also those men whose emotional range resembles that of the women!) which is one indication of the man who writes like women. Women, I am sure, must recognize these tarnished sisters, for only a woman soul could divine their hidden secrets, their griefs and indirect reflexes, and reveal them so remorselessly. As a rule the masculine portraits of women, even as great an instance as James's immortal Lady, are approximations (conventionalized, too) rather than fulfilled creations: the qualities of mind and soul may be there, but not the tricks, the little gestures, those subtle indirections which only women recognize and properly evaluate among themselves. All these Mr. Huxley has, as no other man novelist of our day that I know has.

One of his female creations demands separate mention: Lucy, the incarnation of all that is vile in woman to date. Lucy is the one rounded, completely delivered character that I have found in the whole brilliant string of Mr. Huxley's books, and before her any mere man must stand aghast, appalled. Women, one might suppose, would flee the creator of Lucy as they would Medusa, but women are said not to mind the spiritually prying eye provided what it reveals makes them interesting. I doubt if any woman novelist at any time has so completely presented the Lucy kind of depravity as has Mr. Huxley. Kipling, in a fit of disgust, tried for Lucy in his line about "a rag and a bone and a hank of hair"; but that was an obscene daubing on a wall compared with the Huxley version. Over this ruthless masterpiece the author lays aside his accustomed manner of ridicule, caricature: he is in deadly earnest

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and admires his own creation too much to distort it. Lucy, terrible as she is—and fascinating to certain males largely because they are completely mystified by her—is not the kind most men writers would care to leave as their masterpiece.

The nearest approach to this female monstrosity is the Editor—more than half-woman on his weaker side—whom Mr. Huxley treats with a pursuing, relentless contempt, which saves him from the reader's disgust. Apparently his creator dislikes feminine traits in men—though why? . . . As for the others, men and women, they are shadow puppets, gaily, maliciously, cruelly thrown up on a drab screen: they make a rancid world, mocking reality close enough to be nauseating.

* * *

It is not because Mr. Huxley is so exceptionally deft that I put him in the forefront of the tribe of man-woman writers. Subtlety is no sex attribute: witness that very fine and subtle work of art, *A Passage to India.* I know of nothing in recent literature subtler than Mr. Foster's unpretentious story, nor with a longer reach. It preserves an air of unpremeditation, as though skilfully put together from trivialities. Simple as it is outwardly, it goes deep into one of the great tragic mysteries of humanity—race antagonism and misunderstanding. It presents for all time that baffling human complex of racial arrogance, of men doing evil with a glow of noblest intention in their breasts, all unconscious of the wrong they are doing. With equal justice it presents the petty aspects of those who are wronged, who fail and must always fail to do themselves justice no matter how excellent their cause may be. . . . Of course, *A Passage to India* has an idea, a theme, which is no longer in the mode, but that in itself is one of its male characteristics. A man who has anything of importance to say usually discovers some general idea or purpose around which to group his material, no matter how inadequate or false or imperfectly developed it may be: it is there like a backbone in a torso. Spineless art, if not wholly a discovery of women writers, is at any rate much practised by them.

A Passage to India is as subtle as the most sinuous product of our introverted writers and has as well form and meaning, and is beyond question male from the first page to the last.

* * *

What do I mean by this sex tag, by a "male" style, "male" imagination? I confess it is not easy to define these terms as precisely as I should like: they must be felt. Just as any handwriting expert is able to distinguish a woman's hand from a man's in a specimen submitted to him—with an occasional mistake—so any expert in letters knows without being told when a manuscript is written by a woman or a man. I have read in my day thousands—perhaps tens of thousands—of manuscripts and I rarely have had to turn to the signature to discover whether a man or a woman was the author. And where there would be any real doubt the product was usually colorless, negative, negligible.

This, obviously, does not imply that the creations of one sex are preferable, better or wiser than those of the other. Merely that they are different. Fundamentally different in manner as well as spiritual content, as they should be to be worth while, being the expression of two distinct organisms, which nature has endowed differently although both use the same media of expression and suffer, roughly speaking, the same experiences. Each is excellent not in the measure that it approaches a sexless norm, but in the measure that it expresses most characteristically the basic traits of its own nature. The critic should not judge according to the sex of the writer nor make allowances nor in any way vary his standard. But as he looks for one kind of performance from a Russian and another from an American, let us

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say, because he knows that the Russian has a distinct psychology, a separate racial and cultural background, which must be reflected in his art, totally different from those of the American, so one looks for qualities in any writing proper to the sex of its creator.

Two pertinent instances of what I mean come to my mind: the work of two authors approximately contemporary and with approximately the same backgrounds, one by a woman and the other by a man. No one could possibly believe that the creator of *Lady into Fox* was a woman or of *Precious Bane* a man. I do not know whether to admire Mrs. Webb's or Mr. Garnett's art more: fortunately it is not necessary to be comparative between two perfect achievements. I savor both. I am grateful for both . . . and I am never troubled one moment because neither one is trying to create in the terms of the other. No man could feel our common world quite as Mrs. Webb feels it in *Precious Bane* and in *Gone to Earth*. No man (not even Mr. Huxley!) could reveal a woman's reactions to certain acute situations as justly as Mrs. Webb. Nor could any woman achieve quite the strange imaginative complexity of Mr. Garnett's delicate fancies in whose depths lie concealed large ideas. If I might venture farther I should say that the man in this case has the stronger imaginative flight while the woman has a more potent sensibility to all physical phenomena. But I am content to have them as they are, separated by the chasm of sex, and each singing a common song in a different key.

* * *

The biologists tell us that there are species which are sexually interchangeable. Man does not belong to those species. He is a mammal, and the mammals conceive and create through the instrumentality of two distinct sexes, each equipped with appropriate organs, temperaments, psychology. It seems to be the fashion nowadays to ignore this rude basic fact, to confuse and swap the sexes. For political and social and economic purposes it may be helpful, temporarily, to forget the biologic distinctions: they have certainly been overstressed in the past to the discomfort and the disadvantage of one sex, the less (overtly) aggressive sex. But in art the distinction cannot be ignored, any more than in the creation of babies, and it might be well if our vociferous younger generation, male and female alike, remembered that as they cannot add a cubit to their stature by taking thought, so no cunning surface imitation will accomplish a real exchange of sex character. All that results is the hermaphrodite! . . .

Nor should any one want to change sex character. The penalty in art as in nature is sterility, extinction. A feminized race in time becomes extinct. So too a feminized art.

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LOST — AN AMERICAN

by Georgia Atwood White

One autumn morning in 1904, I was entering the gateway of the British Museum, accompanied by an English friend. As we approached the wide stone steps, he put his hand on my arm.

"Look! There is Hudson, the naturalist, coming."

Advancing towards us at a swift but uneven pace, came an extremely tall and ungainly figure. His head was bent forward as if the weight of Atlas were on his broad stooped shoulders and his nose, like the beak of some predatory bird, was well in advance of the rest of his body. Like rapiers, his eyes gleamed at me from under his bushy eyebrows. He carried his long arms swinging a little behind his hips as if he were about to jump forward at the next step. In his appearance, there was nothing in common with the crowd through which he was ploughing his way.

"That man is no Englishman."

"But you are mistaken—quite. He was born in South America, to be sure, but he's a colonial, nevertheless."

I turned back to the Museum entrance, unconvinced. Before my mind's eye streamed a procession of New England men, of Yankees, of old uncles coming in from the hay fields, tall, gaunt, shrewd but kindly, and shabbily dressed. They seemed the shadowy brothers of this man who had just passed by. Once there was a man of New England ancestry who split rails in a western state. You never could have imagined him to be any one but a Yankee, no matter where circumstances might have placed him. Such a figure had William H. Hudson.

Yet I was not foolish enough to mention my impressions to my English friend. He would have said in a bantering tone, "That's another one of your wild American ideas. No! You cannot claim this man of Nature. He is ours".

Still, I felt I had not reached the bottom of the matter. It then became a pleasant occupation of mine to track down in all of Hudson's essays any reference he might make to his childhood and parentage, but I could find nothing to back up my intuitions at that time. Instead, I found a curious slighting of the subject of the United States. One epithet in a solitary mention of our country was hardly flattering, when he spoke of Hawthorne, "coming to the Old Home from that outlandish United States".

He quoted Thoreau once, in a description of squirrels that adds lustre to his own narrative; but his most severe criticism was for Dr. Holmes's story of *Elsie Venner,* the serpent girl. He introduced a lengthy essay on it by saying:

> Ordinarily, in considering an excellent romance we are rightly careless about the small inaccuracies with regard to matters of fact which may appear in it; for the writer who is able to produce a work of art must not and cannot be a specialist or a microscopist. Dr. Holmes'

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work is an exception. We distinctly refuse to overlook its distortions of fact and false inferences in the province of zoölogy.

After two pages of similar condemnation, he wrote that he wished that Hawthorne had had this conception for he would have been able to handle it in a better manner. However true this criticism may be, it seems surprising to have it come from one who already had written a tale with much the same motive, portraying a girl, half-bird and half-human, in Rima of *Green Mansions*. We had accepted that poetic and ethereal tale as a fantasy, not calling Hudson to account for the impossibility of establishing her peculiar traits on scientific facts; neither would we wish to mar its eerie magic by doing so. Only two American authors won his admiration, Hawthorne and Herman Melville whose *Moby Dick* he considered the "great American Book". In the transcendentalism of Hawthorne and the animism of Melville he found an echo of his own soul.

When the publication of *Far Away and Long Ago* was announced in 1918, I awaited the first copy of the American edition with feverish interest. Would I find in that autobiographical account some answer to my questionings? I fear the matchless prose was skimmed over, in the first reading, by my rapid search for the salient facts of his early life. At last, on Page 316, among the many beautiful tributes he had paid to his mother were these words:

> To her, a child of New England parents and ancestors, reared in an intensely religious atmosphere, the people of the pampas, among whom her lot was cast, must have appeared like inhabitants of another world. They were as strange to her soul, morally and spiritually, as they were unlike her own people outwardly, in language, dress and customs.

This was the only reference he made to his mother's country, but it was an arresting finger-post, pointing me to a more thorough search of his autobiography for those homely little details that slip unnoticed into any man's account of his childhood, even if he thinks he has suppressed the main facts.

No New England woman can be transplanted anywhere in the world, whether it be China or the Argentine, and not take New England ways with her. Let us see if Hudson, now an old man of seventy-five, ill and alone on his bed in cold and dour Cornwall, remembers the foods his mother cooked for her boys in sunny Argentine.

Yes, here they are, listed on Page 200, with sturdy American names. Hot corn cakes with syrup for breakfast; potato salad with onions; peach preserves with hot bread for supper; pumpkin and apple pies with crusts; sweet potatoes and, above all, pickled peaches! Memories of farm kitchens with spicy odors on September mornings, transferred to the pampas of the Argentine! Many a Spanish *ranchero* came to taste her pickled peaches at the hospitable table of the Hudsons and took away the recipe to preserve the glutted harvest of peaches for the winter, which before that had rotted on the ground. If Hudson had been brought up on English viands he would have longed for kidney pie and tart and custard.

He speaks of his mother's thrift, cleverness, neatness in housekeeping under trying conditions, her hospitality, her charity towards less fortunate neighbors, even to the point of nursing a starving Spanish baby along with her own little boy, and of her deeply religious nature. With such a mother, what curious obstinacy led him to ignore, so completely and apparently intentionally, her country and its delegated influence on his childish years?

William H. Hudson died in 1922 and in 1924 Morley Roberts brought out his biography which he calls *A Portrait*.

On Page 6 are these illuminating facts. Not only was Katherine Kimble, his mother, a native of the state of Maine, but his father, Daniel Hudson, and his uncles were born in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and their

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births recorded in the vital statistics of the Second Congregational Church of that town. His father was born in 1804, married in the same town, and when Daniel Hudson developed tuberculosis, the young couple emigrated to the Argentine, becoming the first American pioneers in sheep raising in the Rio de La Plata state. Their son, William, was born at Quilmes and baptized at Buenos Aires in the First Methodist Episcopal Church (American).

It was William H. Hudson's grandfather who came to America from Exeter, England, in the Eighteenth Century. The question now is what racial impress has a man, whose mother was a descendant of the Pilgrim Fathers, whose father was also an American of the first generation and whose own birthplace was a colony of Spain? Not until he was sixty years of age did Hudson become a naturalized Englishman. These facts seem very unwelcome to Hudson's "Boswell", for he, too, does not refer to the United States except by a petty fling at the origin of Hudson's mother, saying, "her family were said to possess a Bible brought over in the *Mayflower,* which appears to have been much burdened with Bibles".

Mr. Roberts acknowledges that facts about his subject are very elusive. Hudson destroyed family letters, personal data, disregarded facts and purposely mislaid dates. He deliberately mystified his friends about his birthplace when he spoke of Exeter, England, as "his natal city", and put his birth in 1846 instead of 1840. He insisted that England was his homeland, much to the amusement of his family.

His biographer conceded again and again his inability to picture his subject in an accurate account, in spite of his friendship of forty years. We suspect he stands a little too close to his friend to focus the picture for us, who know Hudson only through *Green Mansions* and *Far Away and Long Ago.* In the dialogues and diary, also, we see more of Mr. Roberts than we do of Hudson; little Roberts, scared and worshipping, circling around his caged eagle but well out of the reach of the talons.

Mr. Hudson's traditional British frame of mind towards all things American may be easily understood when we reflect that he matured his judgments in the Nineteenth Century under unusual circumstances. The Hudson family in the Argentine was surrounded by British settlers. Their children were tutored by itinerant English teachers and an Irish priest. There could be little communication in those years with their people in the north, when one letter would take many months to reach New England and cost as many dollars for transmission from hand to hand by the captains of the coastwise ships. American literature was still in its infancy, the Hudson children, in consequence, being nurtured on Dickens and Thackeray and the Brontës. All political news came by way of London. Hudson's father was a man of peace, good natured, unassertive, never seeking argument with his neighbors. His most shining virtues were his fatal defects, which ended in financial disaster. Mr. and Mrs. Hudson had left Marblehead while slaves were still peaceably and comfortably employed in the best families.

From the child of such a couple, one would not expect a militant partisanship for either side in our Civil War. A young man brought up by his tutors to regard the American Revolution as "a rebellion against the mother country" would not be interested in America's struggles to maintain the Union, although there flowed in his veins from his mother's side the rebellious blood of the patriots. He lived in the midst of revolutions and counter-revolutions of bombastic Latin type and doubtless regarded the affairs of the United States in the same light. Mr. Roberts had evidently profited by reading Samuel Butler's remarks on hereditary influence:

> Accidents which happen to a man before he is born, in the person of his ancestors, will leave

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an indelible impression upon him. They will have molded his character so, do what he will, it is hardly possible for him to escape their consequences.

First, Mr. Roberts acknowledges that types of men like Hudson are sometimes found in England but are extremely rare. He draws attention to the peculiar voices of the men of the Hudson family, their cackling laugh and high head tones.

Did he never hear the Yankee nasal twang of our natives?

Did he never notice the loose-jointed suppleness of our Olympian athletes or the tall, sinewy stature of our men in the Great War?

Yet, remembering that he must look for ancestral traits to solve the riddle of Hudson's peculiar characteristics, he takes a long jump backward even for a biographer—from the Argentine to post-glacial Britain of four thousand years ago! He finds great joy in proving that Hudson's head measurements are those of the ancient "beaker" man who ranged the British Isles after the ice period, building barrows for his burial mounds and leaving in them the "beaker" from which he drank as a testimony of his existence.

We admire Mr. Roberts's agility in this far backward somersault through the ages, but what a pity that he did not stop awhile with us and see the "beaker" man who is so scarce in Britain in full operation here. What a delightful tea party that must have been when Mr. Roberts secured the presence of the great anthropologist, Sir Arthur Keith, and Mr. Hudson submitted to having his head measured. What satisfaction it was to them all to explain the large brachycephalic brain index of the naturalist as the entire product of the British "beaker" man.

Not long ago, I was spending a few weeks in Cornwall at Penzance, where Hudson went so often in his later years and where he died. Having at last learned his antecedents, I thought as I strolled down the crooked, paved streets of that old seaport town, how like Marblehead in the western world it was. Is there any place in England more like the wild coast of Maine or the rocks of Cape Ann than this strip of Cornwall from Land's End to Devon? Surely these "accidents before birth" are wonderfully strong in their far-reaching call down the years.

I talked with the bookseller on the steep side street. He had passed many an hour beside Hudson in his lodging house around the corner. Telling me of the old man's pathetic fear of age and death, of his eccentricities and obstinacies, of his irritable ways, yet his kindliness towards all birds, beasts and humans who deserved it, he wound up with this eulogy: "He was a rare one, a rough old chap; but you know I liked him —rather".

Academic science has always looked at Hudson askance. Samuel Butler had taught him "to throw too many brickbats", but his value to the world was not whether this or that bird acted in this or that manner. It was whether your eyes were directed to the bird, so you could see for yourself.

He hated women who wore feathers and peasants who caught songbirds on cruel hooks as they flung themselves at the cliffs of England in their great annual migrations. He hated the breed of bishops who allowed their cooks to imprison wretched white owls in their fiery palace kitchens. He would have refused to eat birds at the King's table. He was what we would call a "character". Strange among English ways, he did not belong to them by birth, carriage, looks or customs, yet he interpreted England of the countryside to Englishmen with a passionate ardor such as has never been since Gilbert White of Selborne studied nature in a limited corner of southern England.

In spite of his studied avoidance of truth, William H. Hudson is a *lost* American, belonging with Henry Thoreau and John Burroughs, and akin to Walt Whitman and Herman Melville.

If his brother could say to him at his parting in Buenos Aires, "Of all the people I

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have ever known, you are the only one I do not know", how can we hope to fathom his reasons for so obstinately covering the facts of his inheritances not only from his public but from his biographer?

Is this hiatus the underlying reason for that ugly thread that appears and re-appears in the tapestry of his life—an unhappy feeling (even among his greatest admirers) that truth has been sacrificed to incident and turn of phrase? Is this why the world of literature claims him and acclaims him, while Science turns a cold shoulder?

The ability to stretch the truth to fit one's pattern, he says, is a literary asset. If his pattern had been followed out in the clearer air of North America, if he had been surrounded by the pioneer spirit he was familiar with, would not his rugged character have responded in amiability and truthfulness?

If, at twenty-eight years of age, he had taken the other turning—if the day he left South America forever he had gone to New York instead of Southampton—would he not have found among his own people a much quicker and fuller reward than the tardy recognition given him by the England he had adopted with almost fanatical ardor?

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THE BIRTH OF NICK CARTER

by Russell M. Coryell

ADJOINING our place in Cornwall, New York, there was a farmer by the name of Pigott. Mr. Pigott had some of the juiciest Northern Spy apples that I ever had the pleasure of stealing. He also had some of the strongest objections to having them stolen. As boys, we credited him with a willingness to shoot our pants full of rock-salt if he caught us. I don't remember that this kept our gang from visiting his orchard, but it certainly made us more cautious and gave us a great thrill. In consequence, we developed a definite technique of escape. When we sighted him from the branches, instead of jumping down and running for our own homes, we ran toward the home of some boy who was not in the party.

On one occasion in particular, two of us, Walter Younge and myself, were very nearly trapped—we must either run back toward my home or toward Mr. Pigott's. We chose the latter and got so involved that we had to duck into Mr. Pigott's own barn and hide in the hay-loft, burrowing down under the hay. Once there, we were afraid to come out; so, to pass the time, Walter began telling me in a subdued whisper about the thrilling exploits of Nick Carter. Until then, I had never heard of the great detective. Walter was under the impression that Nick was a real man, in some way allied with Jesse James, and he said his parents had licked him for reading about him. He warned me not to let my mother and father know he had told me the stories.

Walter told his stories with thrilling directness, plunging into the murders and hair-breadth escapes with a primitive power that stirred my imagination. He also dramatized the necessity for maintaining absolute secrecy at home. I realized at once that Nick Carter was a thoroughly illicit pleasure and swore that I would not tell my people. From then on, the Nick Carter stories were always associated in my mind with the pleasures of wrongdoing—and I was exceedingly careful not to mention the name of Nick Carter before my father or mother.

But things came to an unexpected head one day. While prowling around the attic, profiting by my parents' absence to open trunks that I had always desired to open, I came upon a big bundle wrapped in brown paper that was filled with scrap-books. To my great surprise, the scrap-books were filled with newspaper clippings, juvenile stories which I knew my father had written, and—marvellous to relate—the forbidden tales of Nick Carter cut from the original pages of *The New York Weekly*. The illustrations thrilled me. My excitement was at its height.

I debated with myself the advisability of keeping my discovery secret. I had no desire to confess that I had been rummaging in the Blue Beard trunks, but at the same time my curiosity was bubbling. Caution was forgotten. I lugged the heavy bundle downstairs and confronted my mother and father with it when they returned.

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It was a dramatic moment. Father was surprised and chagrined. Taken off his guard, his first impulse was one of resentment. He had a high forehead and, when I saw the blood mount to it, I regretted my rash curiosity. But father had a fortunate sense of humor that never left him for long. He admitted that he was none other than Nick Carter himself—the man whose name I had not dared mention in my own home. Wow! How my three brothers and I devoured those stories!

Thrill upon thrill, as we read the first three stories in which Nick made his bow to the world. Nick's father, old Sim Carter, was himself a detective of extraordinary ability and had trained Nick from childhood to be the super-perfect, superhuman detective. My brother Hubert describes Nick as:

> . . . a trained athlete. He could wrestle, box, or fence better than any other man in the world. He was of medium size but a veritable Hercules. "With one blow of his small, compact fist, he could fell an ox."

That last sentence delighted us boys and became a sort of slogan with us; and I, at least, immediately transferred to myself all of Nick's prodigious strength and cunning. Wasn't I Nick Carter's son? But part of the joy of being Nick Carter's son was spoiled by the fact that father asked us not to tell our boy friends or anyone else. He didn't want to be known as the author of "dime novels". Why he should be ashamed of such marvellous tales was beyond our youthful comprehension, but he so impressed on us the necessity for secrecy that we actually did keep the matter to ourselves. Nick Carter was a family skeleton that was never shown to the public.

Father had always declared that the Nick Carter stories were "poor stuff" and more than thirty years passed before he read one of his own detective thrillers. But partly due to the notoriety they had achieved and partly, also, because of our enthusiastic praise of them, Father at last gave them a reading. His reactions were interesting. I believe he got a genuine thrill. At any rate, he read them all, laughing at some till the tears ran down his cheeks. It was characteristic of him that when he laughed very hard his eyes flowed tears, and it is a familiar boyhood memory, that picture of him, drying his eyes with one of his huge Chinese silk handkerchiefs.

"Why, that's not bad at all," he said with amusement and a sort of surprised pride, after finishing *The American Marquis,* which had been his very first detective story—though Nick Carter played no part in it. "It's actually well written—and I did every word of it by hand. I was too poor to own a typewriter. I was so poor, in fact, that I was 'on my uppers'—my bare foot coming through the sole of my shoes—the day I got the order from Street & Smith to go ahead with the story and finish it."

Father loosened up and told us a good bit about his early struggles that day. Ordinarily, he found it difficult to talk about himself, but the reading of his story awakened memories that in the far retrospect were no longer painful but quite warm and pleasant. Until then he had been writing short juvenile stories for *St. Nicholas, Harper's Young People, Golden Days,* etc. They were well-written little stories which had won him prizes in competition against such writers as Louisa M. Alcott, but they were not sufficiently lucrative. His first baby was on its way and a lot more money was needed. He was desperate. Desperation drove him to the offices of Street & Smith with the offer to write them a long detective serial for *The New York Weekly.* Someone from the Street & Smith office said afterwards: "Coryell came to us that first time, an unknown writer, and assured us that he could write us a better story than any of our experienced men. We smiled at his conceit and told him to submit a story. He did so—and that story increased our circulation in a phenomenal way. Of course, we called him in then and asked him if he thought he could do the same trick twice.

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"'Twice?' Coryell said with an air of annoyance. 'I don't *think* I can do it twice. I *know* I can. Not *twice* but *every* time.'

"The most astounding gall of any man I ever saw. But the fact is he did do it twice, and thrice, and every time he wrote."

It is true that Father was very sure of himself. He was a curious mixture of sincere modesty and breath-taking self-assurance. He was sure of his ability as a craftsman, sure of the soundness of his logic, sure of his comprehension of definite fields of knowledge—but he was equally sure of his limitations, always ready to listen attentively to anyone's opinion and grant their greater knowledge in fields with which he was not familiar. As to his "astounding gall", I think he was inwardly as much amused by it as anyone else.

The uncertainty regarding the real author of Nick Carter once caused me a very unpleasant five minutes. I was a journalist at the time in Paris, on the staff of the now defunct *Paris Evening Telegram*. A cable reached us from the United States with the startling message: "Creator of Nick Carter stories commits suicide".

My backbone turned to junket, for I supposed that in some terrible way Father had been driven to take his life. Heart in my throat, I read on, gathering details. As if planned on purpose for my torture, that unfortunate cable was so worded that I had to read clear through to the end before I learned the name of the supposed "original Nick Carter" who was, of course, in no way related to me.

I took the cable to the city editor and explained that the information was incorrect. "Incorrect!" he shouted savagely, "What do I care? It's good copy. Shove it through!"

Another incident occurred in Genoa, Italy. I had been presented to a gentle lady of the Italian nobility and mentioned the fact that my Father was Nick Carter. She clasped her hands and looked at me with awed eyes. "Just to think!" she exclaimed, "that I should actually meet the son of Nick Carter! Why, I used to go without pastry and ice cream in order to spend that allowance money for the weekly Nick Carter stories."

Some of the Nick Carter stories were "poor stuff", as Father characterized them. Others were well written, packed full of action, thrilling from the first word to the last. Of this type were his first four detective stories—the ones that gave Nick Carter his first tremendous popularity and sent the sales of *The New York Weekly* booming. These four stories, in order of writing, were: *The American Marquis, The Old Detective's Pupil, A Wall Street Haul,* and *Fighting Against Millions.* Those stories are still being printed and sold by Street & Smith—evidence of their appeal.

Writing under great pressure as Father did, it was impossible to make every story a good one. He wrote literally hundreds of them, though just how many we cannot be sure, for he kept no records. We are not even sure of all the different pen names under which he wrote. Among them, however, are: Nick Carter, Milton Quarterly, Harry Dubois Millman, Lucy May Russell, Julia Edwards, Lillian R. Drayton, Geraldine Fleming, Bertha M. Clay,* Barbara Howard, Margaret Grant, Tyman Currio. He wrote a few things of a more sober nature under his own name and of these he was moderately proud.

The first two books under his own name were long juvenile stories dealing with the adventures of boys who crossed the ocean with Columbus. They were *Diccon the Bold* and *Diego Pinzon.* These were good, clean stories, full of action but done very carefully and accurately—and much time was given to making them historically correct. Indeed, their accuracy was such that they were used in the public schools. It is curious to note that these two books were sandwiched in between the periods when he was writing as Nick Carter and Bertha M. Clay.

* Father did not originate the name, Bertha M. Clay, but at her death continued writing under her name. Bertha M. Clay was the pen name for Charlotte M. Braeme, an Englishwoman.

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Other novels under his own name were written about 1917. Some were love stories, others detective stories of the type of *The Blue Rose*. The latter appeared in *The Popular Magazine* and was very successful. It was written much more slowly than the Nick Carter stories and with more attention to plot, characterization and probability.

Of all his writings, Father took the most pride in his plays. Financially they were not very successful—and only two of them were ever produced. *The Western Girl* and *Peggy Did It* appeared for a short time in the English provinces and the former toured the British war camps with much applause and little financial return. Most of his plays dealt with social problems and were about twenty years too advanced. Today I suppose our flappers would yawn over them. His play-writing years were filled with high hopes and desolating misadventures, and the London manager kept us seesawing up and down with his letters promising an early showing or bemoaning an unexpected reverse. Innumerable letters of this sort came:

> . . . Mr. Forbes-Robertson, who is nephew to Sir Johnston, has been looking for a play for some time and is anxious to secure the rights (to *A Western Girl*). He has promised to mount and cast it properly, and this will be a good opportunity for the London managers to see it. His agreement would only extend for twelve months so that in the event of a West End manager undertaking to produce, we could easily withdraw the rights at the end of that period.

But some difficulty arose and Forbes-Robertson did not take the play on the road. One other time the play was in rehearsal when a German Zeppelin raid on London threw them into panic and the play was abandoned. These failures were tragic, because Father was thoroughly proud of his plays and wanted them to go over big. The irony of his literary success is that his Nick Carter stories, which he called "poor stuff", will probably bring him whatever lasting reputation ever comes to him.

I have been asked how Father composed the Nick Carter stories. It is a question difficult to answer. I do know this, however. The complete plot with its successive conflicts and story development was all carefully planned before he sat down to write. I know that the climax of each of his detective stories was conceived first and then the story was worked out backward, situation by situation, to the beginning. Situation was always more important to him in detective tales than character. Some writers conceive a character and let the character dictate the situations, but Father conceived the situation first and then decided what character would best fit that. As a result, his characters never took the bit in their mouths and altered his story for him. He made them do what he had planned they should.

After a complete plot-sequence had been worked out, Father began work on the instalments. These were planned in minute detail in his head—not on paper. He actually visualized the written page, as it was to be, seeing the paragraphing and even the punctuation, so that when he sat down to work he had little more to do than copy his mental vision.

This painstaking detailed planning of his stories was accomplished in the very early morning—from four o'clock on till seven—and again in the afternoons when he would take long, fast walks over the mountains. He would go then from ten to fifteen miles along the wood-trails over Storm King, Black Rock and the adjacent mountains; and anyone who wanted to walk with him had to step out fast and hold his tongue. Father had a peculiar, short, swift stride that was very effective.

He wrote very rapidly, never re-read or corrected his copy, never re-read his stories after they were printed. He had neither time nor inclination to do so. I wish, however, that he had at least kept records of his stories. If it had not been for my mother, we would not

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today have those priceless old scrap-books that I found in the garret. It was she who cut out the stories and pasted them.

As a hack writer or production-hound, one would hardly expect Father to be temperamental. The stories should have trickled off his fingers in a mechanical stream, once they had been concocted and planned in his extraordinary, detailed way. Unfortunately, however, Father was very easily disturbed. Though the story was teeming and bubbling in his head, he could not always sit down and pound it off on a daily wordage basis. A disagreement with one of us boys was sufficient to upset his whole day. I remember when we boys were going off to school or college in the fall, one at one time, one at another, Father would never be able to write for the day or two preceding each departure and for a day or two after. At such times he would go about looking miserable and loving at the same time. He was likely to turn desperately to his photography or his garden for amusement at those periods. And we learned to gauge his mental condition by means of a barometer we had evolved from study of him. When he would leave his study in the middle of the morning and stride off into the mountains with his big camera and tripod on his shoulder, we knew things were going hard. The same was true if he took a hoe and went out into the garden, or hid himself away in his dark-room developing plates or printing photographs. On the contrary it was always a happy sign when he would take a tape-measure and start measuring the house for proposed alterations, or start drawing the plans of new houses that were to be built according to his ideals.

When things were going smoothly, the story-plot all developed, no family worries, Father would simply let his imagination run riot over the incidents that were building up his situations. He would get Nick into difficulties from which it was humanly impossible to escape—and then make him find a way out. On one occasion, when for the end of an instalment father had had Nick bound hand and foot and tossed over the side of an Atlantic liner in mid-ocean, one of the Street & Smith editors shook a doubting head: "My God, Coryell!" he begged, "can't you curb that damned imagination of yours?"

Father undoubtedly got a great deal of pleasure from the actual writing of his stories. The planning of them was mechanical but the execution involved his emotions. I have walked in on him in his study more than once to find him either chuckling with amusement while his fingers flew or, at other times, weeping tears of sympathy for his innocent heroine. Yes, he actually laughed and wept as he wrote.

"Nobody else may laugh or cry over this stuff," he has often said to me, "but I've had my fun."

If I can, I should like to describe Father and his background, to link up his own personal adventures with those he put Nick Carter through. I should like to show what experiences and what mental characteristics of his were adapted to the creation of a character like Nick Carter and the turning out of those high-powered, triple expansion detective stories that thrilled his youthful readers.

In appearance, to my earliest recollection, he was short and inclined to be stout, though as a young man he had been very slender. Blue-black hair; clear, blue, penetrating eyes; a skin of Irish fairness—for there was Irish, French, Dutch and American blood in him. (The Coryell family was descended from French Huguenots driven out of France. They settled early in America. One ancestor, a Coryell, was a pall-bearer to Washington. Another, Sarah de Rapalje, was the first white Christian child to be born in New Netherlands—New York). Father had a high forehead, long nose, deep-set eyes with heavy brows, firm mouth and square chin. He was very erect, had a quick and muscular way of walking and an air of quiet self-confidence. In reality he was shy, but he hid his shyness under an apparent aggressiveness.

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Anyone meeting Father for the first time was likely to be impressed by his brilliant repartee and his quick response to a humorous situation. This was coupled with a really extraordinary fund of information and an ability to line up this information in a logical sequence which made him a difficult person to worst in an argument. As a young man, he started to study law. His fondness for adventure, however, led him to abandon college at the age of seventeen and sail away to China to join his family. His father was building battleships for the Chinese government. That was in 1869.

During the voyage to China he nearly lost his life in a typhoon. The small ship was badly tossed in the huge waves. Missionaries kneeled on the deck and prayed. The captain passed the word that the ship could not live through the storm. That tempestuous crossing stood father in good stead later in life when he needed story material.

In Shanghai he was made Vice-Consul-in-Charge and automatically became a magistrate in the civil courts there, with the power of life and death, while still a boy of twenty. His whole life in China was varied and colorful, an ideal background for a writer. In his spare time he trained his own wild Manchurian ponies. He also learned to shoot with the bow and arrow. His bow was a very powerful one made of the spliced horns of the Indian buffalo—a terrible weapon and one requiring iron muscles to pull. Father, though a short man, was very powerful. He also went in for trapeze work and work on the horizontal bar. Nick Carter, detective, had hardly a better physical or mental training.

From China, Father went to California, at that time a land of adventure and "bad men". In San Francisco, he went into the ship-brokerage business and, being an atrocious business man, lost all his money. To keep alive, he found himself forced into writing. Harrison Gray Otis, then struggling to make a success of his little newspaper in Santa Barbara, called Father down to help him. The journey from San Francisco to Santa Barbara at that time had to be made by stage coach over rough trails that had their bandits. We have Father's detailed account of the trip in a letter written to my mother to whom he was then engaged. The coach a few hours ahead of them was held up but Father's reached town without trouble. Arrived at Santa Barbara, however, Father found Otis in deep trouble with a bunch of crooked politicians whom he was trying to clear out of town. The struggle appealed to Father and he went after them. As a result of one of his articles he was challenged to a duel by one of Santa Barbara's notorious bad men.

Father knew nothing about shooting but was afraid, he said, to back out of the encounter lest he be shot anyway. He therefore bought himself a little bulldog pistol which fired one shot, for he said he was sure he would never get a chance to fire more than one. Then he sent word to the gunman, a huge fellow over six feet tall, that he was ready to meet him and set a certain saloon in Santa Barbara as the rendezvous. They were to shoot on sight.

"Tell him," he said to his second, "that my pistol shoots only once—and that once is all I need to shoot." His sense of humor didn't abandon him even then when, as he said of himself, his knees were knocking together with dread of the approaching duel. The curious thing is that when he arrived at the saloon, he forgot all about the pistol in his pocket and jumped at the desperado with his fists. He weighed one hundred and nineteen pounds and the bad man about one hundred and sixty. There you have Nick Carter in action. *The Sacramento Leader's* account is in part as follows:

> Gray, reaching for his pistol pocket, began a tirade of abuse. Before, however, ten words were uttered, Mr. Coryell gave him a sound thrashing, ending by kicking him into the street. Gray afterward threatened to shoot Mr. Coryell, who, arming himself, again sought him and invited

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him into the vacant story of a building and told him he would fight him a duel with pistols if he (Gray) had the courage. Gray's craven heart forsook him, whereupon Coryell pulled his nose and slapped his face.

Once started on his career of writing, Father found he could not abandon it. As a business man he was hopeless. He returned east from California with little or no money, married the girl to whom he had been engaged for seven years and started in housekeeping with an empty purse.

Newspaper work was not sufficiently lucrative for a married man, and that was when Father began writing short juvenile stories. The juveniles also paid too little, so with the same "nerve" that had prompted him to send his message of defiance to the Santa Barbara bad man, he walked into the Street & Smith offices and told them he could write a better story than any of their writers.

I have told how the editors shrugged their shoulders at his conceit but told him to go ahead and try. He did try. He sat down and wrote all afternoon and most of the night; Mother brought him his supper at four in the morning. He wrote at top speed, a trick newspaper training had taught him. He applied newspaper principles to that, his first long story: facts, action, murder, theft, blackmail—all the things that delight the reading public even today. The result was that the story went over strong.

Nick Carter, detective, appeared in the next story, *The Old Detective's Pupil*. Nick was born of financial need, an imagination that worked at high velocity and drew on past experiences for realism, and a newspaper training that had made swift creation easy.

Nick Carter stormed the world. He became not just a character in a book but a part of the English language. Nick Carter is today almost a synonym for "detective". The name was a valuable asset both to Father and to his publishers yet, after establishing its value, Father abandoned it, leaving to another human dynamo the task of turning out a detective story each week.

From the fast and furious detective story, Father switched to writing glamorous love stories of the Bertha M. Clay type. He apparently had a remarkable versatility which permitted him to create stories of many different types with equal facility. To quote my brother:

> At one time father was contracted to turn out a million words a year of this stuff—and did it too. To accomplish it and yet not let it be known that he wrote practically all the stories in the paper, he used six different pen-names at once. . . . But the marvelous thing to me is the way father could write six different stories at a time, an installment of each for every working day in the week, with most of them started in print before they had ended in his brain.
>
> Six heroes, six heroines, six villains, six plots, six settings! I wonder how many authors today could equal that record and still write stories that kept increasing the circulation of the magazine.

Twenty thousand words a week, year after year, is quite a stunt! Those were times of nervous tension at home. We were small boys and it was difficult to make us understand that we ought not to shout and fight under Father's study window. He used to get desperate at times. I have known him to go six days without writing a word and then sit down on the seventh day and write his entire twenty thousand words in twenty-four hours. That meant hammering the old typewriter without a pause, almost. Yet off would go the manuscript, always on time, neat and tidy, almost no typographical errors, no corrections. His manuscripts were extraordinarily perfect. In all his years as an author he never failed to deliver a manuscript on time.

I think it was about 1900 that Father made another radical change in the type of writing he was doing. He abandoned the dime novel and began writing short articles of a satirical nature on social problems. I remember such titles as "What Is Morality?" These

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were written for Bernarr Macfadden and published in *Physical Culture* and *A Cry for Justice* under the pseudonym of Margaret Grant. There was also a long, first-person story of the *True Story* type, called the *Child of Love*. A long satirical serial story, called *The Weird and Wonderful Story of Another World,* purported to be the personal experiences of a visitor to Jupiter. This was so realistically written that a major in the Salvation Army wrote begging Father to take him to Jupiter, since "there must be a wonderful field for religious work there". Then came the advent of the *True Story Magazine* and Father became a permanent member of the Macfadden staff, writing for them until his death on July 15, 1924, at his summer home in Readfield, Maine.

As a parent, Father was undoubtedly unusual. After trying out various disciplinary measures on my three brothers and finding them fruitless, probably because my brothers were incorrigible anyway, he came to the conclusion that discipline was valueless. The result was that I was raised without a spanking. "What a pity!" I hear some unkind person say. Father's idea, however, was this: though a whipping was a source of great relief to an angry parent it was absolutely worthless as a means of moral education for the child. Even when we squabbled under Father's window, we did not feel the paternal slipper. The worst that ever happened was to have Father come out—desperate-eyed, flushed, harassed.

"Boys! *Can't* you go somewhere else? I'm sorry to be always driving you away—but I've *got* to write." Then, all disturbed over having had to scold us, he would go back to his typewriter—and be unable to do a stroke of work for the rest of the day. We ought to have been properly remorseful, but apparently we weren't, for the next day we would be under his window again, squabbling and fighting. Probably a psycho-analyst would say we did it on purpose because we liked to get his attention.

I want to finish this reminiscence with a quotation from a newspaper article written by one of Father's editorial associates, Lyon Mearson:

> For two years I worked in the office adjoining his. I never saw him hurried, I never saw him exasperated, I never saw him old or tired. My last picture of John—all his friends called him that, no matter what the difference in age—is calm and peaceful and keen, smiling gently, quietly and humanly friendly. He died while reading a manuscript, and is buried beneath an old elm in Maine. I loved him.

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HIAWATHA IN HAWAII

by Genevieve Taggard

Ah Hop and Ah Pau were two little Chinese-Hawaiian boys in my school when I was teaching the fourth grade on a plantation. *Pau* is the Hawaiian word for *stop;* fathers usually name the thirteenth or fifteenth child Pau. I loved Ah Hop and I loved Ah Pau; sometimes one, sometimes the other. They were both adorable little boys; and they nearly drove me mad trying to make them mind and behave.

I had a roomful of fifty; and fifty is a lot to make mind in a drowsy, warm, chalk-dusted school-room. They squirmed in their seats, they poked their toes through the cracks of the seats of the children in front; they brought in centipedes without nippers. They were terrible.

Ah Pau had a face like a little bad Puck. He was about as tall as my desk and wore little long trousers of blue denim and clean shirts. His face was golden and he had half-moon eyes. His father and his mother were both Chinese-Hawaiian. I think he really was a thirteenth child.

Ah Hop was very different. He was stocky and round-headed. And he never looked at me without a look of shyness and hurt crossing his face. His eyes were black, and his hair stiff and black. He liked me very much although he shuffled in and out of the school-room with his eyes always on the floor and only moved his lips when I said, "Good morning". But once, when I sat at the desk with my head in my hand waiting for the blackboards to be erased, I caught sight through my fingers of a shy black piercing eye looking at me with concern.

But they were both as bad as they could be. And I was only eighteen and didn't have any idea how to bang them into shape. The rest of the children were so dull that I could bring them in and turn them out and make them spell and add by moving my arms and ringing the bell on the desk. I rang it, then I said, "One", and they turned toward the aisle; I said, "Two", and they rose up behind each other; I said, "Three, Mark time, Mark", and they scuffed their feet and began to file out onto the veranda where they broke lines and whooped off to the playground.

Across the road in the tangle of lantana and algaroba trees a forlorn soda-water works chugged, bottling soda-pop. The pump went all day, out there in the wilderness, with an irregular rhythm; the pop went away in trucks to the railroad; the plant was run by a Japanese and the soda was salty in spite of its rich syrup because all the water around there was salty. All day that soda-works annoyed me with its erratic tune of chug-chugging that had a pause I could never calculate. And its being the only other thing away out there away from everybody (except the railroad station) and the fact that I kept thinking all the time that the soda, after all that work, used salty water—made it an accompaniment to my teaching job, and a funny one, too.

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I went in to think over teaching, and Ah Hop and Ah Pau. That morning I had got a letter from the Department of Public Instruction, commanding me to give an entertainment at the school for which I was to charge an admission of ten cents which, when collected, I was to turn over to the Department of Public Instruction, with greetings, for the Christmas Fund at the Molokai Leper Settlement. The Department further stated that I was to give a dramatization of *Hiawatha* made from the poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the children's poet, and that I could get the sewing class to make the costumes.

The Department of Public Instruction further stated that it was sending as a gift to our little school a plaster bust of the children's poet which I could get the boys' carpentering class to make a shelf for and which I could use to illustrate my talks on Saint Longfellow.

All this I could do.

The next day the station agent brought up the box with the plaster bust in it. The children said, "Ah-h-h-h-h", and "Ahwey", over and over, at the sight. I stayed after school and put up the shelf myself with a hammer borrowed from the soda works, because there was no boys' carpentering class.

Then I took the damn *Hiawatha* play home and read it. The next morning, smirking as little as possible, I gave a speech, ending up by saying that Hiawatha was a good boy and never hurt living things and never cut the nippers off centipedes (joke for me) and behaved very well in all his social relationships, and *therefore,* since both Ah Hop and Ah Pau were exactly right for the Hiawatha part and would look very nice in an imitation leather costume, I would give the part to the boy who was the kindest to dumb things and to fellow pupils and to me, also, the teacher. And on that speech we lived peaceably for some time; almost two days.

And then Ah Pau decided it wasn't worth it, and broke for his old diversions and brought a pocketful of grasshoppers in after recess and let them loose into the starched back of the little Japanese girl in front of him. I put him in a seat by himself and gave him up.

Ah Hop had the part—by elimination—and besides he had been very good. A nervous black eye told me he wanted to be Hiawatha more than anything. I measured him and went home to make the beaded costumes for the play since there was no girls' sewing class. That was Friday.

Monday morning an impassive and unhappy face came up to the desk before school began, two bare feet shuffled on the floor, Ah Hop twisted one finger and poked the backs of the books.

"No can be Hiawatha," he announced.

"Why, Ah Hop?"

"My papa no like."

"Why?"

"He say no good."

"Why?"

"He say me watch rice-fields."

"Oh, you have to go home after school and scare off the rice birds?"

"Yes."

"Too bad, Ah Hop."

"Me no like."

"I'm sorry."

So Ah Pau got it after all. And how he crowed triumph! How he strutted, announced his lines, made grimaces at stoic Ah Hop—how he loved getting it by not trying at all! Never have the wordy lines of Saint Longfellow been more unctuously pronounced than as Ah Pau said them, with a bad pidgin-English accent. And when the costume got done at last, how he twirled in his finery, half-moon eyes gleaming, to make Ah Hop see just how much, by his bad luck, he had missed.

One day, coming in at noon I found the plaster bust minus a nose and a very tidy little pencilled moustache marked on top of the plaster one. There were prints of bare feet on the bottom of a chair; I knew the

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villain. I knew, I thought, just how long Ah Pau had been planning to de-nose the children's poet. But what could I do? It was the afternoon of the performance and nobody but the villain knew the lines.

And so the villain had his day, as villains do, and nobody noticed the noseless bust elevated over our heads. I hoped to attend to that on Monday. The Japanese mothers and fathers came that night and sat, slightly larger children, in the little seats before the little desks; the Chinese mothers and fathers stayed away as they always did; the Chinese-Hawaiian parents were all there, but they had to sit on the floor between the aisles because they were too big to squeeze into the seats. We had cut down a lot of prickly kiawe trees to represent the forest of murmuring pines; we had made a wigwam and an imitation fire with red paper to represent flame. And there was Ah Pau in his imitation leather costume and his pidgin accent.

So the play began and everybody loved it. The kerosene lamps smoked up to the ceiling and smudged their tin reflectors. Old Nokomis said her say and Hiawatha answered in hexameters, bobbing his feathered head. Ah Hop was not there.

He couldn't stand his rival's triumph, I said to myself, but I had thought he would come, in his stoic way, and look on, very surly under a frown. He hadn't even come. I was sorry.

And just then I noticed a flattened nose against the window-pane and, when I stole out to the veranda, there he was, watching like a cat every move Ah Pau was making. He probably couldn't have played the part half so well. "Ah Hop," I said, taking hold of him. He started and then looked down at his feet, overcome.

"Look here, Ah Hop, wouldn't your father let you be Hiawatha, or was there another reason? Did you lie to me?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"That was just a story then?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"Why didn't you want to be Hiawatha?"

"I want," he said getting very tight around the mouth.

"What happened then?"

"I swear," he said laconically.

(In the Islands the children call any dirty word "swearing" and the missionaries have made swearing the cardinal sin. You can lie, steal, play hooky and take the nose off Longfellow and still be forgiven.)

So I said, "Oh, Ah Hop, I am so ashamed."

"I no can help," he cried desperately. "I no like swear."

He looked at me a moment to size me up —whether or not I would understand.

Then:

"Hiawatha never swear," he announced.

Well, I saw the point.

"So you told me your father wouldn't let you."

"Yea."

"What did you say?" I demanded.

His head sank low on his little breast. He shook it slowly.

"Come, Ah Hop. You've got to tell me what you said."

"No."

"Is it too bad?"

"Yea."

It probably was, I commented to myself.

Suddenly he looked up at me. "I hear the men on the railroad say it all the time." A long pause. "Ah Pau make a song about me when he no can be Hiawatha and everybody sing, and I say . . . *Beat it! Beat it!*"

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FRANK NORRIS

by C. Hartley Grattan

THE work of Frank Norris offers to the critic more problems in discrimination than any comparable body of fiction in American literature. He was not only a self-conscious rebel (for if he had been that alone the problem would be simplified). Unfortunately, he was also a rebel whose mind was extraordinarily impressionable, one who lived in an age in which the impressions offered were strong and contradictory. In his work realism and romance, art and journalism, art and business, rebellion and tradition, all come into conflict. While a considerable part of his work may be ignored, a residue remains which is of unquestionable importance. Three of his novels are undoubtedly of the first rank: *McTeague, Vandover and the Brute* and *The Octopus*. Various lesser stories supplement these masterly works. One must subject his theories to severe criticism. As a pioneer in realism who went far beyond the limits marked out by William Dean Howells, he had to justify himself but, since he was not the sort of person to whom it is natural to deal with ideas, he boggled the matter badly.

Norris lived through one of the most dynamic periods in American history (1870-1902). Whatever we may think of those days, he considered that the "three great and highly developed phases of Nineteenth Century Intelligence" were "science, manufactures and journalism". In the term, journalism, Norris included literature. To him fiction-writing was a branch of reporting. In this may be found the genesis of his peculiarly perverse attitudes and the origin of many of his weaknesses. Norris did not have the analytical intelligence of an iconoclast. His rebelliousness was emotional and disorderly. He did not possess the faculty of concentrating his intelligence with piercing, destructive consistency upon his enmities. Instead, he shouted his blasphemies and trusted to the emotional force of his assertions to win him adherents. The journalization of fiction was taken by him to mean making it acceptable to the people and responsive to their demands.

"No art," Norris wrote, "that is not in the end understood by the People can live or ever did live a single generation. In the larger view, in the last analysis, the People pronounce the final judgment . . . they are after all the real seekers after truth. [Norris was fond of capitals and probably considered that they added strength to his argument.] It is not now," he went on, "a question of esthetic interest—that is, the artist's, the amateur's, the cognoscente's. It is a question of vital interest. A novel then should have chiefly a story interest, and should either tell, show, or prove something. Above all it should be remembered that 'the artist is a teacher and not a trickster.'"

As the novelist is more powerful than the newspaper or the pulpit in influencing the ideas of people, a novel should always contribute to raising the tone of social life. Style was to him of no importance: "Tell your yarn and let your style go to the devil". In-

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stead of style one should aim to have a first-hand knowledge of the contemporary scene, either through close reading of the newspapers or through direct observation. Norris, in brief, seemed bent on removing intellectual and esthetic values from fiction and replacing them with values derived from rapid, accurate, first-hand accounts of observed phenomena. The novelist was to be no more than a brilliant journalist. (If Norris and Howells could have added each to the other their respective strengths, ardor for reality and meticulous style, how much more important each would have been.)

The ideas that Norris put forth about the desirable literary personality are equally without penetration. In the first place he was sure that if a novelist "is to voice the spirit of the times aright, if he is to interpret his fellows justly, he must be a Man of the People, a Good Citizen". For "one does not claim that the artist is above the business man". Furthermore:

> The better the personal-morality of the writer, the better his writings. Consider Stevenson, or our own "Dean", or Hugo or Scott, men of the simplest lives, uncompromising in rectitude, scrupulously, punctiliously, quixotically honest; their morality—surely in the cases of Stevenson and Hugo—setting a new standard of religion, at least a new code of ethics.

This, certainly, is not the writing of a man with a clear comprehension of the esthetic personality. Quite apart from theory, Norris seems actually to have identified himself with the business man, for in his novels the artist is an ineffectual weakling. That is the contrast between Corthell and Jadwin in *The Pit*. The men wholly to be admired he declared to be men "made in the mould of the Leonard Woods and the Theodore Roosevelts". Such an opinion was surely that of the average "man of the people" of Norris's day. Holding these astonishing opinions, so hostile to the development of a literary personality, it is a wonder Norris managed to write three novels of major significance.

Norris was not the only important writer subjected to the influences dominant between the years 1870 and 1900. Mark Twain lived through those years also and, while he never so directly stated his conclusions, some of his activities and admirations point to a similar formulation. Henry James, on the other hand, contemned the whole situation as a plague to the spirit and worked out a special solution not widely applicable. Ambrose Bierce and Stephen Crane clashed with the environment also but not to their detriment. Certainly James, Bierce and Crane were not so confused in their ideas as Norris. Twain probably was. No one at any period in American literature asserted more decidedly the necessity of literary ideals than Henry James. No one had a keener sense of the necessity of style and form. Living in the same period, why did Norris accept Zola and ignore Flaubert entirely? Because Zola "got up" his subjects and flung "everything pell-mell into one overflowing *pot-au-feu*", and Flaubert proposed to write a novel which should be sustained by its style? There is no reason except Norris's utter contempt for esthetic merits. Stephen Crane and Bierce wrote journalism, of course, but they did not consider their serious work journalism. Nor did they admit the necessity of being as much like business men as possible. Norris's confusion was quite personal and in no sense the general literary attitude of his time. Few of his meritorious contemporaries arrived at his conclusions. None of his substantial successors has endorsed them.

II

His successors did, however, profit largely by his practice. There Norris stands as an unquestioned pioneer. Yet his practice was singularly uneven and the books published between 1898 and 1914 are of very unequal merit. Not all of this can be accounted for on the grounds of early and later work. Successive novels widely diverge and confusion is discoverable in single works. The novel

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which was in the process of publication when he died in 1902 was markedly inferior to *Vandover and the Brute* which he had apparently forgotten and which was posthumously published in 1914. *Moran of the Lady Letty* (1898), *Blix* (1899) and *A Man's Woman* (1900) cannot be classed with his three masterpieces. Nor can *The Pit* (1903) be classed with them either. Some light can be gained by reference to his distinction between realism and romance.

According to Norris, romance "takes cognizance of variations from the type of normal life", while realism is "the kind of fiction that confines itself to the type of normal life". Realism "is minute; it is the drama of a broken teacup, the tragedy of a walk down the block, the excitement of an afternoon call". Romance has "the wide world for a range, and the unplumbed depths of the human heart, and the mystery of sex, and the problems of life, and the black unsearched penetralia of the soul of man". Following out his distinction Norris believed himself to be a romanticist. His detailed study of sordid lower-class life in San Francisco is romance because the life is exceptional. So is his story of shipwreck and pirates. His story of wheat raising and railroad chicanery is romance. And when he ended *McTeague* with an impossibly melodramatic chase, leading to death in the desert, that also was romance!

But if the law of parsimony be applied to literary definitions, Frank Swinnerton's definitions are more useful and accurate. According to Swinnerton, a romance is "a fiction, the chief interest in which is supported by varied incidents of uncommon or obsolete nature". And "realism is applied only to work in which the author's invention and imagination have been strictly disciplined by experienced judgment, and in which his direct aim has been precision rather than the attainment of broad effects". Following these definitions two of Norris's great novels are realistic, and one, to a slight extent, romantic. The minor novels are all romantic.

During 1893-94 Norris wrote a novel of power and brilliance which he never polished and which was not published until 1914. *Vandover and the Brute* is, as it stands, an American masterpiece. It is consistent, accurate and powerful realism. As a study of the progressive degradation of a character, it is comparable to the story of Hurstwood in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. There is always about Norris's characters a certain over-simplification. This fault is particularly obvious in the case of Vandover, who is split rather too neatly into two parts, artist and "brute". But the tragedy is so well wrought out that Vandover's lack of complexity is forgotten. The curve of his life ascends and then plunges downward without the slightest deviation from the inevitable. His corruption and defeat by the "brute" in him is never moralized and the successive struggles to reform which progressively weaken in strength are rendered with brilliance and detachment. There is no palliating, no heightening of tones, no release of emotional intensity, until the end. Why Norris did not always write in this fashion is beyond comprehension. The only explanation possible is that deduced by reference to his astonishing theories. How they led him astray is apparent in his next great novel.

McTeague (1899) is an amazingly detailed description of the life of a stupid, animalistic, unlicensed dentist in the slums of San Francisco. For a convincing study of environmental and human sordidness it is unsurpassed in American literature. Through the story runs the motif of lust for money—greed, in motion picture parlance. The working out of McTeague's degradation through his inherent laziness is shrewd and convincing. The corruption of Trina, his wife, by her meanness is never for a moment unreal, and it is entirely inevitable. The convincing report of San Francisco slum life is obviously corrected constantly by reference to actual observation. Its precision is unquestionable. Character and environment are given to us with astonishing realism, and the scene is prepared

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for a cathartic ending. But it is not achieved. Inevitable and progressive degradation is heaped upon Trina and her husband, culminating in the sordid murder of Trina by McTeague. Then the cumulative effect is partially (the power of the preparation prevents it being wholly so) destroyed by a melodramatic chase of McTeague by the police through the mines and out into the desert, where he is killed. Not only is this "romantic", but it is meretriciously so, for it is grotesquely incongruous. It is confusion: a confusion of practice by theory.

However, in *The Octopus* (1901) Norris came nearer to realizing his theoretical opinions about the novel. To be sure, *The Octopus* is disorderly and often disjointed, but it is written with a flare and with power. The shift has been made from precise rendition of detail, to a habit of sweeping generalization. *The Octopus* is an epic, not a study. The effect arises from the hugeness of the drama rather than from cumulation of detail. The colors are broad, bright and splashed, rather than precise, subdued and considered. There is no diminution of power, and little falling off of quality. Norris justified his ideas as never before or since. His object was to write the opening volume of a trilogy dealing with the growth, distribution and consumption of wheat. Wheat is conceived of as an impersonal force driving men to their destiny. Into *The Octopus* he injected a passionate, rolling and powerful drama of wheat-growing, and the struggle of the wheat growers with the railroad—the octopus. Probably nowhere in American literature has there been a more constant and frank emphasis on the sexual nature of the fecundity of the earth. Norris rose at points to the frenzy of a believer in a fertility cult—and his imagery is constantly sexual. He conceived also of the earth as communicating to the farmers something of its power. The life is on a plane of primitive strength and abundance. The men and women are distinctly American, and it should be said, in spite of the conflicting influences to which Norris was subjected, he never deviated from the essential American pattern of life he was at the moment recording. The large and fertile abundance of the life of these American peasants is unmistakably American. No one could for a moment confuse them with Russians, Reymont's Poles, Zola's Frenchmen, Hamsun's Norwegians, Hardy's Englishmen, Sudermann's Germans, or even with Suckow's German-Americans. They are Americans of the old British stock. The struggle with the railroad is, of course, peculiar to America of the 'nineties. Out of it grew various farmers' political rebellions. Norris got excellent drama out of the situation, completely overtopping Hamlin Garland in catching and rendering that particular significance which inheres in the group. In *The Octopus* Norris produced his third and last great novel.

The rest of his work is definitely subordinate. *The Pit* (1903), the second volume of his uncompleted trilogy of wheat, seems to me decidedly weaker and more conventional in form and manner. The eastern literary journals in their reviews, conscious perhaps that Norris had recently died, greeted it more effusively than any previous novel of his. But the note constantly sounded, in some cases the note emphasized, was that it was more conventional in manner and substance. No one's pruderies could possibly be shocked. Yet take out the grain pit scenes and the whole book collapses. The superstructure erected around the grain trading is too extensive and too flimsy to be justified by the central core. The wheat trading does not sufficiently integrate the book. To be sure, the drama is more concentrated, but I am not convinced that it has equal or even approximate power to that in *The Octopus*. On the whole it is a weaker book and gives evidential color to the idea that Norris would not have held out as a rebel for very long. He was, it seems, marked for academic acceptance—and that meant a weakening. *Moran of the Lady Letty* has some splashy, gaudy writing, but it is quite outside his

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stronger vein. *Blix* is better. It is written in a swift, clear style, and gives a buoyant picture of Norris's own life in San Francisco, culminating in his successful love affair and his journey east. He wrote to Isaac Marcosson: ". . . don't quote me as admitting that there is a real 'Blix', not in any case 'til after next summer, when, if you happen to be in New York, I should be more than pleased to have you meet her". It is his only excursion into autobiographical fiction and the interest is heightened thereby. *A Man's Woman* is a rapidly written story of Arctic exploration, utilizing the strong man and strong woman idea. It has a certain fascination as a yarn, but not significance. Of his short stories the less said, the better, for he himself held them in supreme contempt.

III

If, after this examination of Norris's novels, there seems to be a discontinuity between his theory and his practice, it need not disturb one. An artist often conquers his theories. Norris's notions about novel writing and the literary personality tell us how he reacted to the dominant social forces of the day. We see now that he lacked penetration and independence in his theories and yet in practice he was a pioneer. Like so many pioneers, he was a bit muddled. There is no denying Norris was a brilliant reporter. The trouble was that reporting could not be relied upon to get him below the surface. For instance, in *The Pit* he caught the shining surface of Chicago very cleverly. He saw a dynamic Chicago—"the new world, western glory that was Chicago". But he did not go deep enough below the surface to find the crooked and brutal Chicago that Theodore Dreiser discovered when he studied the same period some years later. When he did apply himself to analysis he achieved great results as we have seen. Mental confusion, however, allowed him to follow out his idea that the public is always right, and led him to publish books which he himself knew were trivial. All of the books which have been briefly discussed, except *The Pit,* met with his own disapproval. He wrote of *A Man's Woman:* "It's a kind of theatrical sort with a lot of niggling analysis to try to justify the violent action of the first few chapters". *Moran* was "dashed off in an interval of relaxation". This is honest, but why were they published? Was he deliberately giving the public what they wanted even when what they wanted was trash? The answer can be only in the affirmative, for from internal evidence in the autobiographical *Blix* it seems certain that Norris was very willing to write what the publishers—and the public—wanted. Norris, in so far as he achieved greatness, achieved it in spite of his theories and prejudices. He had greatness thrust upon him by his great talents. Since Norris believed that the artist should as nearly as possible approach to the standards and outlook of the "good citizen", there is every reason to believe that he would eventually have abandoned even his pioneering practice and become completely conventional. He was headed in that direction when he died. This may be deduced from these observations by a conservative critic:

> For a good while after the first appearance of *The Octopus,* not much was said aloud about the book. It was a thing painful to read and disquieting to remember . . . *The Pit* is a better constructed and more efficiently handled narrative than its predecessor, but *it is more like other books.* [My italics.]

Norris had previously been, this critic continued, "half taught and superficially civilized". Obviously he could only be accepted when his books became more like other books. His confused ideals would not have kept him permanently among the rebels. A few years more and he would probably have been among the civilized and accepted. Yet, if he was visibly weakening, all recklessness was not abandoned, for just before he died he engineered the publication of the first edition of Dreiser's *Sister Carrie.*

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THE HISTORY OF THEIR BOOKS

VII. IRVIN S. COBB

by Arthur Bartlett Maurice

SEVENTEEN or eighteen years ago a famous trial, that of Charles W. Morse, held the country's attention. It was a battle marked by the matching of legal strategy and the forensic clash of eminent lawyers but, dominating the courtroom, was the defendant himself—doomed to conviction, yet cool, resourceful, in the grim hour of retribution living the lines of Henley's "Invictus", his head "bloody, but unbowed", "master of my fate" and "captain of my soul". Among those working at the reporters' table was Irvin S. Cobb, writing the story of the trial for the *Evening World*.

One day, leaving the court at the end of a session in company with James Montague, Mr. Cobb expressed his admiration for the courage of the little man on trial. "They can't lick him. A will like his can't be bent or broken. Let them send him to Atlanta. He will become the real ruler of the prison and put it on a business basis; or, if that doesn't interest him, he will find some means of escape." But Mr. Montague did not agree. "They'll break him all right or, rather, the prison will break him. It breaks them all."

Overnight Irvin S. Cobb, the story-teller, was born. He was thirty-five years of age and had already won something of a reputation as a humorist. But with the exception of a twelve-hundred word sketch, published in a Kentucky paper when he was twenty-two and years later elaborated into the grim story, "Fishhead", he had never attempted fiction. The little man on trial was at once a challenge and an inspiration. Nothing mental would subjugate that spirit; something physical might. Into his mind flashed the idea of the handcuffs, gripping, relentless and with this idea came the story, "The Escape of Mr. Trimm". This, his first story, he still likes best.

Imparting to his wife the rather startling news that their whole scheme of life was about to change, that he had decided to give up a certain livelihood to embark upon the sea of chance, Mr. Cobb took a vacation and in a few days had written the story that he first called "The Grip of the Law". He had been doing some work for *Everybody's Magazine,* then edited by Theodore Dreiser; so he sent the story there. Dreiser liked it, but returned it with the explanation that the man who then owned the magazine had once been a business partner of Charles W. Morse and for that reason would probably object to the publication of the tale. It was then sent to the *Saturday Evening Post* and there, despite the fact that it differed in every way from the general idea of what a *Post* story should be, it was immediately accepted.

In that corner of the Valhalla of Fiction, in which congregate the heroes and heroines of contemporary American writers, a not inconspicuous figure is the Judge Priest who has been the *deus ex machina* of so many of the Irvin S. Cobb tales. Who is or, rather,

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who was Judge Priest? Actually, he was a composite character, with traits drawn from four different men, one of them Irvin Cobb's own father, and two others who were prominent citizens of Paducah, Kentucky, in the years of the author's boyhood. But the basis of the character was the jurist, Judge William Bishop, well known to Kentuckians of a generation ago. Benevolent, wise, keen in humor, verbally he was two persons, racily colloquial in his everyday talk and a veritable fount of the old school oratory when on the bench.

The hero of forty tales, first introduced in "Words and Music", Judge Priest was a chance discovery, an afterthought. At the suggestion of George Horace Lorimer of the *Post,* Mr. Cobb undertook to invent for the purposes of fiction a new type of the old Southern darkey. The result was Jeff Poindexter, who, in later years, as narrated in "J. Poindexter, Colored", made a memorable journey to New York in personal attendance on Mr. Dallas Pulliam, rescued his master from the wiles of crooked oil speculators and designing women and was on the way to becoming a prominent figure in the moving picture industry of Harlem's Negro life as Col. J. Exeter Poindexter. In the original design, however, Jeff was merely a servant of the Old South and its old ideals. Inventing Jeff, Mr. Cobb had to find a master for him, and out of that need Judge Priest was born.

For the germ ideas of his stories Mr. Cobb has drawn from every possible source—from the memories of his boyhood; from life, tragic and comic as it is reflected from day to day in the columns of the newspapers; from the suggestions of friends who often rush to him with what they believe to be the idea for a typical "Irvin Cobb story" and, once, from a very unusual dream. Bred and developed in the newspaper office, he has always found the news a rich mine. The story, "An Occurrence Up a Side Street", was the development of an idea that grew out of the notorious Crippen case. Crippen was an American dentist living in London who murdered his American wife and fled to Canada with his paramour who was disguised as a boy. When the ship on which the two were crossing the Atlantic arrived in Quebec, a Scotland Yard man was waiting on the dock with a warrant. He had made the crossing on a faster steamer.

Highly sensational as the case was in itself, it was doubly stirring as news for the reason that it was the first time that the wireless was used in the apprehension of escaping criminals. The story is an excellent example of the method of a good literary workman in transmuting his material. In "An Occurrence Up a Side Street" Mr. Cobb used only the psychological situation. There was no wireless, no transatlantic flight. Apart, each might have had a chance; held together by the partnership in crime, both were doomed to capture. In this conception lay the tale's tensity.

Probably the Irvin Cobb story that has been most widely reprinted and most frequently included in collections of short stories is "The Belled Buzzard". The beginnings of that tale go back to Mr. Cobb's boyhood, when the swooping buzzards were an everyday sight, and the story of the reappearance of the belled buzzard, regarded by the superstitious as a forerunner of disaster, was a periodic feature of the country newspapers. The tale as eventually written assumed form when Mr. Cobb was returning from a fishing trip to Tybee Island at the mouth of the Savannah River in Georgia. A dying shark had been tossed up on the beach, and the buzzards gathered, waiting for the last tremor indicating that life had ceased before striking. The picture in the fading twilight suggested a sinister Nemesis, and in the three-quarters of an hour of the return trip from the fishing grounds it was assembled to the last detail. Soon after it was written in three or four days in an Adirondack camp.

The story, "Blacker than Sin", is an exam-

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ple of a story carried in dim outline for years before being written. It is the tale of a woman who, dressed in black and heavily veiled, dogs the footsteps of a man who had wronged her when both were young, following him in his daily walks, but never addressing him. The twist at the end, by which the woman, dying, bequeaths the relentless pursuit to her black maid, swearing her to it on her death bed, was pure invention. But the basis of the story was a bit of Kentucky history of post-Civil War days.

From Virginia a veteran officer of the Confederacy went to Louisville, established himself there and became one of the city's leading citizens, and a member of the best clubs. In time the vengeful woman of his past appeared in her black robes and heavy veiling. She became known as "the Colonel's Shadow". For years she followed him. The day came when he could stand it no longer. In the public market he turned on her and bade her begone. In her anger she seized a frozen rabbit from a near-by stand and struck him with it. She was arrested and tried for assault. The young lawyer who defended her told the story of her wrongs so eloquently that the Colonel had to be escorted from the court room under police protection and the lawyer was sent to Congress. For twenty-five years Irvin Cobb carried that story. Fifteen years elapsed between the decision to turn it into fiction and the actual writing.

We all dream stories. In that moment of curious exaltation between the dream and the waking they seem the most wonderful stories in the world. With the full waking, they vanish or reveal themselves as inconsequential. Once in a lifetime there is an exception. Once in his lifetime Irvin Cobb has had that experience. The story was "Three Wise Men of the East Side", intricate in plot, involving a triple double-crossing. Mr. Cobb dreamed it to the last detail and the last name. With the morning he found that there was only one element to be added, and that not absolutely essential. The story was written and became a finished script within twelve hours of the beginning of the dream.

The tale, "When April the First Was August the Second", tells of a New Englander toiling in a dreary island of the South Sea to win the competence that will enable him to return home and marry the woman of his heart. Once every three months a steamer stops at the island bringing him a pile of home town papers which he arranges in chronological order, reading one every day, limiting himself to that one, and steeling himself against curiosity. On August second he reads the paper of the previous April first, and the practical joke of the home town cut-up results in red tragedy.

The germ of that tale came in war days, when Irvin Cobb, in London, was living at the Savage Club on Adelphi Terrace. There he saw much of an English officer who had been returned invalided from the front. The officer told him of his experiences of four years in a remote island. His only diversion had been the batch of newspapers that arrived four times a year. He confined himself to one a day, and no sensational divorce suit or murder mystery that had been stirring London could move him to read ahead.

A favorite Irvin Cobb story is "The Great Auk", the tale of an old actor who, in a deserted theatre in Irving Place, New York, struts the boards, declaiming to an imaginary audience from his repertory of the past. Mr. Cobb owes the suggestion to Bozeman Bulger, the sports writer. Once, when Mr. Bulger was in Chicago with the New York Giants, he met an old time vaudeville star in a saloon. The actor, much shaken with age and drink, announced with a flourish as he left that he had been spending the afternoon at the seashore. The bartender explained. The actor, without resources, was allowed to sleep in an abandoned theatre that was cluttered up with old scenery. His distorted imagination reflected some particular bit of scenery, and he sallied forth in the evening believing that his day had been spent in a feudal castle on the Rhine or in a palace

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in Spain. Mr. Bulger saw a comic story; to Mr. Cobb it suggested another angle and presented the old actor and his delusion as the great auk, as something extinct, belonging wholly to an irrevocable past.

From Rollin Kirby, the cartoonist, came the original idea of "The Wooden Decoy". When the old New York Police Headquarters, generally known as 300 Mulberry Street, were torn down, there was found deep underground a row of forgotten cells. They had seen service when Inspector Burns was introducing the third degree. Into one of these cells a suspect who persisted in maintaining silence was thrust and conveniently forgotten. At the end of thirty-six hours of hunger, solitude and darkness he was usually in a mood to talk. In time a refinement was added. A second prisoner, bearing the marks of physical injury, was thrust with convincing brutality into the cell with the first. The two were drawn together by loneliness. The newcomer confessed to appalling crimes, inviting reciprocal confidences. Of course, the next day the first prisoner was confronted with the testimony of his cell mate, revealed as No. So-and-So of the official police.

The story, "Thunders of Silence", told of the downfall of an oratorical politician of demagogic tendencies when the newspapers resorted to the simple expedient of ignoring him entirely. It was a tale that sent the whole country into a roar of laughter for an hour, and its principal character was drawn close to a then living model, but beyond that it was from first to last pure invention. On the other hand, occurrences in real life were responsible for "Killed With Kindness", "A Lady and a Gentleman" and the comic skit, "Peace on Earth". The experiences related in the last named tale actually happened; only, the central figure was a clergyman instead of an author.

Perhaps the history of no one of Irvin Cobb's stories has been more curious than his latest work and first full-fledged novel, *Red Likker*. A magazine wanted an Irvin Cobb story to run as a serial and wanted it at once. The author began writing with no plot and without a single character. He had only his setting, the old Kentucky of his boyhood and its folklore. "Shadow-boxing", as he calls it, he wrote his first chapter, a picture of the pioneer days of Daniel Boone. Still "shadow-boxing", he wrote his second chapter descriptive of the Civil War period. Eventually *Red Likker* became a narrative of approximately 100,000 words. Mr. Cobb "shadow-boxed" through the first 15,000 words before he found either his man or his story. Then, all at once, he saw that he had both, that in Attila Bird, Kentucky distiller, he had builded both hero and tale.

Again and again, the old stories of the world are being rewritten. Hardly a year passes, for example, without a new version of the tale of Cinderella, a heroine who, incidentally, traces her origin far beyond the lovely Cendrillon of the old French legend; indeed, back to a fairy tale written by the Greek geographer Strabo in A. D. 24. In the work of Irvin Cobb there is one dominant influence; one story that he has often rewritten. It is a parable to be found in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke. It concerns two men who went up into the Temple to pray.

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ENDS AND ENDINGS

by John Macy

When the Irishman was told that many people are killed in rear-end collisions, he asked, "Why don't they leave the last car off?" The wisdom of that question may be applied to literature. Most books, especially novels and plays, have inadequate terminal facilities and, in a sense different from the usual intention of the words, end unhappily. If the fifth acts of all the plays of Shakespeare were destroyed, much less than a fifth of Shakespeare would be lost. The important ideas are fully developed by the fourth act or earlier, and the piling up of corpses at the close of the tragedies and the perfunctory matings at the close of the comedies are lame and impotent conclusions.

The tragedy ends: *He dies* or *She dies*. The comedy ends: *They kiss*. All plays end that way with slight variations of phrasing. If the author's phrasing is interesting in its variations, we can see him through to his curtain. But most authors, even the giants, stagger toward the close and are at their weakest in substance and style as they approach what is supposed to be the climax.

Aristotle, a great critic who never created a work of art, thought that tragedy cleanses our systems of pity and fear, leaving us purged and serene. *Katharsis* is his much debated word for the process. If there be such a psycho-sanitary action, the dose has been swallowed by the time the tragic situation is fully developed, and there can be no further tranquillizing effect in witnessing the sanguinary expirations which the spectator's imagination has already foreseen.

Hamlet and his mother could enthrall us all night with the subtle poison of their talk. But when the physical poison in a gilt goblet is passed round there is no venomous magic in it; poetry has evaporated, except for Hamlet's one simple miraculous line: "The rest is silence". Most of the act is a bore, and I will not be a mute or audience to it if I can escape without disturbing my neighbors. Death is not interesting. It is commonplace. The interesting thing is the way to dusty death. The high points of beauty and excitement are in the course of the journey, not in the arrival.

In mystery tales and detective yarns the *dénouement* is important; it is the whole story for which the rest is only a more or less tricky preparation. But this is a secondary type of fiction even in the hands of a master. I cannot lament the passing of Sherlock Holmes, though he afforded us much entertainment in his time—and in our time, when we were younger and less critical than, unhappily, we are now. Those stories by O. Henry in which he turns double flip-flops in the last paragraphs are not his best work. The joke loses point in having too many points, and the reaction is not one of delighted surprise but of disappointment that a real humorist and man of humane fancy has perpetrated a piece of witless cleverness.

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To be sure, the game of mystification and solution is amusing. Poe enjoyed it in his cool intellectual fashion and took a conceited pleasure in his ability to plot baffling outcomes and guess those plotted by others.

One simple reason why many books of great merit end feebly is that the author gets tired. Even Dickens, a man of inexhaustible vigor and great ingenuity in narrative, who falls in love with his characters and hates to take leave of them, shows signs of weariness toward the close of some of his best novels. Thackeray, too, shows fatigue, but he cannot let go; he collapses with a sigh.

There is a deeper reason than the author's lack of steam to account for the failure of a book to make port, that is, an honest book. The reason is that life has no port. It is an endless, aimless process. Even the death of our hero does not wind up everything, for he leaves behind him other people who carry on the struggle beyond the back cover of the book, for an indefinite time after he has been obliterated or sent to Heaven or Hell. The sincere writer cannot pretend to know where we get off; any destination is but a momentary pause. The beautiful epilogue of Raleigh's *History of the World* is bad history and bad philosophy. And it is false with unwitting irony as the conclusion of a book that was never finished and that Raleigh and his assistants could not have finished if they had lived three hundred years and taken H. G. Wells into partnership.

The best way to end a book, which can record nothing but an episode or series of episodes, a section chopped out of the interminable continuity of life, is perhaps simply to stop, to quit, to leave the end bleeding. But that is merely a suggestion on which I do not insist, and some masters have shown us better ways. As the exceptions which prove my rules which, of course, are not rules at all but only somewhat speculative observations, I recall a few endings that seem to me happy (that is, satisfactory) endings which are artistically complete and yet open, leaving laughter or horror to go on to some imaginable but uncertain forever.

Tristram Shandy never gets anywhere; it would have been wrecked if its cunning master had tried to steer it to a harbor. *A Sentimental Journey* ends not on a period but on a delicate dash. Sterne had a diabolical system, or lack of system, of punctuation, appropriate to his devilishly subtle ideas.

Shelley's *The Cenci* has a conventional tragic climax, since Beatrice goes to her execution. But the final scene between mother and daughter is one of the loveliest passages in the drama, a rare thing in tragic poetry, and holds a sorrow that is deeper than death:

> Here, Mother, tie
> My girdle for me, and bind up this hair
> In any simple knot; ay, that does well.
> And yours I see is coming down. How often
> Have we done this for one another; now
> We shall not do it any more. My Lord,
> We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well.

The whole last scene of Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness* is one of the most beautiful in all the rich Elizabethan drama. With this one play Heywood takes his place among the greatest of that great age. "A prose Shakespeare", Lamb called him. He is simpler, less rhetorical, less magnificent than some of his contemporaries; his naturalism has a curiously modern flavor.

Ibsen's *Ghosts*! This is bad biology or pathology, but Oswald's ultimate reaching for the sun is a stunning dramatic effect. Echegaray, who has been ineptly called the Spanish Ibsen, confessedly borrowed that one idea from the Norwegian master.

Howells's *A Modern Instance* is a fine novel in spite of its naïveté. The old man was an artist sometimes, and forty years ago it was a bold and original thing to end a novel on a note of doubt: "I don't know".

Almost every novel by D. H. Lawrence! He has a wonderful sense of the continuity of life, of the bright and dark streaks of everlastingness, which fade and flicker but never

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perish. *The Lost Girl, Women in Love, The Rainbow, Aaron's Rod* persist beyond the last word, which is never spoken because it cannot be. The end of *Sons and Lovers* is a marvellous piece of writing—the little human being a spark in the whirling universe.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (James Joyce) ends at a beginning, a new encounter with life. I did not finish *Ulysses* because I had to return a borrowed copy. Where does that Odyssey of a day terminate? I cannot imagine any man of Joyce's creation getting home and shutting the door.

If Thackeray was not skilful in winding up his stories (why did he not stop *The Newcomes* with the pleasantly sentimental death of the Colonel?) he had a humorous sense of the difficulty of endings and of what may happen after the tale is told. His burlesque of Scott, *Rebecca and Rowena,* begins on the theme (the opposite of mine) that stories end too soon:

> Well-beloved novel-readers and gentle patronesses of romance, assuredly it has often occurred to every one of you, that the books we delight in have very unsatisfactory conclusions, and end quite prematurely with page 320 of the third volume. At that epoch of the history it is well known that the hero is seldom more than thirty years old, and the heroine by consequence seven or eight years younger; and I would ask any of you whether it is fair to suppose that people after the above age have nothing worthy of note in their lives, and cease to exist as they drive away from Saint George's, Hanover Square.

The end of this burlesque romance is quite satisfactory:

> Married I am sure they were [Ivanhoe and Rebecca], and adopted little Cedric; but I don't think they had any other children, or were subsequently very boisterously happy. Of some sort of happiness melancholy is a characteristic, and I think these were a solemn pair and died rather early.

Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* has an unforgettable last page, one of terrible sadness, of irremediable disaster. It was a new thing in English fiction seventy years ago. George Eliot seems to have been the only critic of record who knew that a great man had arrived.

Many of Hardy's conclusions are good, usually not a crescendo but a sad, vanishing strain of disillusion; even his wedding-bells are hell's bells. Once he plays an abominable trick for which it is hard to forgive so great an artist. The end of *Tess* is wantonly cruel; probability deliberately tortured into unpleasantness. It is not likely that Clare and Tess's sister would have been where they could see the black flag.

Conrad is a master of conclusions, and of beginnings, and middles, where he sometimes begins! An extraordinary finish is that of *Victory,* for it is a finish, complete annihilation, oblivion. The last word is "nothing".

In literature other than fiction the reader's energy, if not the writer's, has been largely devoted to the earlier parts of the work. It has been pointed out that most familiar quotations are to be found before the middle of the original work. We start to read many masterpieces and finish few. Both reader and writer are fresher at the beginning. But the essential difficulty in ending a book corresponds to the great fact of life that nothing begins and nothing ends. The wise Marcus Aurelius knew this and so made a perfect conclusion to his discourses, "To Himself":

> Man, you have been a citizen in the great world-city. Five years or fifty, what matters it? To every man his due, as law allots. Why then protest? No tyrant gives you your dismissal, no unjust judge, but nature who gave you the admission. It is like the prætor discharging some player whom he has engaged,—"But the five acts are not complete; I have played but three."—Good; life's drama, look you, is complete in three. The completeness is in his hands who first authorized your composition, and now your dissolution; neither was your work. Serenely take your leave; serene as he who gives you your discharge.

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A LONDON LETTER

by Rebecca West

The Femina-Vie Heureuse prizes—Two brilliant young writers, Evelyn Waugh and Robert Byron—Old Kensington—Where one may dream of Keats—Why H. M. Tomlinson was called an imitator of Conrad—Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins, the perfect Lord-lieutenant—The artist as courtier—Sir Edmund Gosse's mingling of officialdom and art —A new and excellent survey of literary criticism.

London, May.

Among the most singular of the fantasias that have been on the theme of internationalism I have always counted chop suey, that dish which introduces a Chinese element to the American gastronomic landscape but is itself unknown in China, and the *Femina-Vie Heureuse* prizes for imaginative literature. Some time during the war the two Parisian papers, *Femina* and *La Vie Heureuse,* which are the same publishing house, decided to give the *Entente Cordiale* a little something to go on with in the form of a prize for the work of imagination of English origin which was best fitted to give France a sympathetic understanding of England if it were translated, and Lord Northcliffe made a reciprocal gesture towards French literature. The choice of the books was to rest with two committees of women writers, one in London and one in Paris. The London committee chooses the three best English books of the year and sends them over to the Paris committee, who selects the prize-winner out of the three; and the Paris committee initiates a like routine.

The joke of the thing is that rarely, if ever, are the books actually translated, and the prize therefore simply records a pious opinion. Here, it is indicated, would be a likely perch for the dove of peace, were things other than they are. But in any case the writer gets fifty pounds, and I for one am always glad that I am a member of the committee, for it brought home to me, as nothing else did, the appalling effects of a war on the artistic life of the nations involved. For in the early days of the committee there was very little for us to consider.

I remember a certain year when we had much ado to scrape up three books that were worth all this fiddle-faddle of selection and transport; and for long there was an unnatural predominance of women writers on our lists, not because we ourselves had any prejudice that way, but simply because the young men had been either killed or temporarily exhausted by the war. This was brought home to me from another angle the other day when I spent a wet week-end in bed rereading Mr. Evelyn Waugh's *Decline and Fall,* which seems to me to be one of the few really funny books of our century, and reading for the first time that dazzling exhibition of scholarship and enthusiasm, Mr. Robert Byron's *The Byzantine Achievement.* Both Mr. Waugh and Mr. Byron are under twenty-five. In fact, had they committed the indiscretion of being born ten years earlier, they would probably be lying dead in the mud somewhere in France, and these books would not be.

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I write of these things because today the English committee held its annual prize-giving ceremony, which takes place in the *Institut Français,* a semi-collegiate institution where distinguished French authors and politicians come and give lectures. I myself have sought it but once for those purposes, on which occasion the lecturer (one of the most famous women novelists of her country) was prevented from coming at the last moment by an attack of influenza; yet I did not count the time wasted, for I liked the telegram she sent. For since the French for influenza is *la grippe* and since she enjoyed only that imperfect command over foreign tongues which is too common among writers, she wrote: "Cannot come; am being gripped in bed".

The *Institut* occupies one of those big, old-fashioned houses in Kensington which make one understand why, in face of all things, one persists in living in London. For the rooms are tall and stately in the Thackerayan manner and the vast windows look forth on Thurlow Square, which is now such a turbulence of white and purple lilac as I do not believe any other city in the world can show so close to its heart. It is just across the road from the Victoria and Albert Museum which, by the way, I beg all American visitors to England to visit, if only to see the one room on the ground floor that has been lined with the façades and portals of old buildings: of timbered Tudor houses of old London, of snug little shops that offered new-built Mayfair the best of soups and jellies, of Palladian mansions built in that wave of ostentatious expenditure on country houses that swept England till the American Revolution brought us to a humbler state of mind.

There is one house that I cannot believe is there. I have to pinch myself to realize that I am looking at it and that it is certified to be what it is claimed to be. It is the front of the school which John Keats attended at Enfield. Is this not a little bit like being presented with a posy of asphodels fresh from the Elysian Fields? For a historic building left *in situ,* unless it can oppose the modern world mass for mass, as Chartres or Edinburgh Castle can, is always having its history scraped off by its impacts with the existence of today. The living will not let the dead lean out from the windows; they push them aside and look down in their much less lively actuality. We cannot hear the three knocks on the door that announced a visitation of eternal significance because it is forever swung back and forth by those who pass on temporal errands. But this school-house, being preserved in this street which is not a street, this room which is not a room, is magically sealed within the moment of its true importance. One can gape at its terra cotta portals and dream undisturbed of that marvellous beauty-drunken youth.

* * *

To go back to the mortals across the road: the Northcliffe prize (which is now being given by Mr. Jonathan Cape) was being presented to Madame Lhotte for *Sur les Fortifs du Paradis,* a novel of Paris slum life with a merry attitude towards fundamentals which, were it practised by any of us English writers, would infallibly lead to a painful interview between our publishers and a police magistrate. This illustrates one of the permanent humors of English life: of which the supreme example was the occasion when the British Academy entertained one Anatole France at the very moment that the libraries were organizing a censorship of fiction on sterner than Bostonian lines. Madame Lhotte did not appear herself to receive her prize, but sent as deputy an extremely handsome young man. Those who have attended many literary gatherings will know that he did not come amiss.

The *Femina-Vie Heureuse* prize was being presented to Mr. H. M. Tomlinson for *Gallions Reach.* Public celebrations, particularly when they centre round himself, do not please Mr. Tomlinson. He is likely, at such times, to resemble a sick monkey with a beautiful soul, who never bites the keepers

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but is fading, fading, fading out of life. But even so, he radiated the charm which he possesses almost more than any other literary man, except perhaps Walter de la Mare, and which is a credit to him, since few men have had a more embittering literary career. When he first emerged as a writer on the sea his emergence happened to coincide with the rise of Joseph Conrad to popular favor; and the fact that they both wrote about these marine matters caused him to be labelled an imitation of Conrad. This is fatuous; for while Conrad is (pardonably enough) a loose and inexact writer of English and gets his strength from the images he pulls somehow (largely by setting hazy phrases side by side) through the tangle of his language and the rhythm with which he arranges them in his tale, Mr. Tomlinson's gift is for the precise use of words which scoop up so much of reality as he desires and leave it on his page. It is, as it were, the art of Turner as against the art of Manet. Their differences in essential character dictated a difference in form.

* * *

The rhythm that so pleased Mr. Tomlinson was the quiet, almost imperceptible rhythm of daily life. He is himself almost completely non-neurotic, giving one the impression that he has found the proper sublimation for every impulse he has ever had; and he has not that supreme degree of creative genius which makes him interested and sympathetic in lives that are totally unlike his own. He, therefore, does not get swept into those vortices which rage round the attempts of a person or a group of persons to resolve some quarrel with the universe, as is the customary behavior of Conrad, who was neurotic and who, even if he had not been, would still have been interested and sympathetic in people who were. In fact, Conrad was a born novelist, and Mr. Tomlinson is a born essayist. And the public will not read essays. Therefore, long he languished unread and when he came into his own, had to do it through *Gallions Reach,* a fine book, but spoiled by the violent insertion into it of the conflicts appropriate to a novel. I wish that everybody who reads it would turn back to an essay on "Earthshine" in Mr. Tomlinson's *Old Junk,* which is unrivalled in its expression of a beauty so subtle that one would have certified it as inexpressible.

* * *

What is written in books, I believe from consideration of cases like Mr. Tomlinson's, is not the half of what humanity would write in books if the conditions of this earth were not so cruel-hard a handicap on it. But there are handicaps of all sorts, which spring up, however those conditions appear to approximate the ideal, as was proved by another person at that prize-giving. The lot of Mr. Tomlinson, who is a member of one of the old sea-faring families of East London, but who was too physically frail to follow the craft of his fathers and had, therefore, to waste his early years as a police-court reporter, his wit being dedicated thus to a literary form not loved by the public, is obviously one that a kindly committee of gods on Olympus could alter and blue-pencil to something that could give a better chance to his gifts. But the lot of Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins, who was there to present the prizes, must, to the superficial view, have appeared simply not susceptible of improvement. He had every social and educational advantage. He had an early and tremendous success: the vogue of *The Prisoner of Zenda* and *The Dolly Dialogues* transcends anything our generation has known in the extent to which those books dominated the public mind at their time. Moreover, he had a magnificent talent. These early Ruritanian books are, as a matter of fact, products of an exuberant imagination that at times touches the elder Dumas. Then came those modern novels—the *Great Miss Driver, Second String, Double Harness, The Intrusions of Peggy*—not only remarkable for delicate suavity of technique but for the picture they give of the English governing classes.

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I shall never forget the horror I felt when I first went to the United States and discovered that the mawkishnesses of Mr. Archibald Marshall were accepted as a true picture of the more prosperous inhabitants of my country. England is not, nor ever was, populated by bread poultices. The Forsytes are better; but they tell not the whole story. But Anthony Hope's novels do depict the true English governing class that ran England till the war and has, in its time, thrown up such as Pitt and Peel and Palmerston: insolent, clever, fearless, unscrupulous along certain lines, scrupulous to the death along others, conventional in adherence to certain outward forms and duties; so far as their own souls were concerned, wildly eccentric. You may read in *The Education of Henry Adams* how profoundly they shocked that restrained New Englander when his diplomatic duties took him to London. Yet, although Anthony Hope had such perfect command over his material and although he had style and taste far beyond his generation, he did not become a great writer, and not one of his books is great. Not one even approached in impressiveness, in authority over the imagination, *The Forsyte Saga;* though so far as endowment is concerned I will swear that Mr. Galsworthy is not up to Anthony Hope's shoulder. Why is it? I got an inkling the other day at the prize-giving when Sir Anthony Hope Hawkins took the chair. He was, to my amazement, the most completely chairman-ish chairman I had ever seen. He, whose command over language is without rival, expressed himself in the clichés that might have been used by the Lord-lieutenant of any county in England when opening a flower show. Moreover he looked like a Lord-lieutenant, and behaved like one: like the very best sort of Lord-lieutenant.

It occurred to me that here was a queer analogy with the case of Velasquez. Everybody who has been to the Prado Museum will know the enormous impression which is made at first by the commanding genius of Velasquez; and the surprise with which one presently finds oneself feeling in front of those pictures an emotion not easily distinguishable from tedium coupled with a disposition to transfer one's regard to the pictures of El Greco or even Goya. It occurs to me that this disparity between the endowment of Velasquez and the effect of his work is explained by those passages in his biography which proudly state that, so different was he from the general run of artists, so controlled and dignified and aristocratic, that he was treated as a courtier of high rank and was, indeed, on at least one occasion, entrusted with diplomatic duties. It is the case, one conceives, that the aristocracy which he used for his material ended by using him as its material instead. He was so impressed by its qualities that he took its standards as his own. These standards are devised to enable man to get along with the phenomena of life in such a way that society will persist. They deal with what is known.

* * *

But the artist's standards must be totally different. They must be derived to enable him to analyze the phenomena of life, so that more can be known. After a certain stage in his career Velasquez paints like a good governor, using the tried method, exalting the familiar ideal of beauty. Because he is an artist this makes us despondent; because if he, the person possessed of more vitality than the common herd, is reduced to telling the same story over and over again, then we shall never push any further out of the slough where we are. But El Greco and Goya rush on, extending the sphere of human knowledge and emotion. There is no question of the human race having come to a dead end. The case of Velasquez is, I think, not unanalogous to that (which is, of course, on a far lesser scale) of Anthony Hope. He wrote of the English aristocracy with such unrestrained sympathy that he adopted its standards; and his books became, therefore, merely the records of its own self-consciousness, instead of new discoveries regarding it.

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I remember gaining at an earlier prize-giving a curious sidelight on another writer who seemed to have compromised his relationship with literature by his taste for the pomp and ceremonies of this earth: Sir Edmund Gosse. It was his task two or three years ago to present the prize to poor Mary Webb, and he performed it as mischievously as he sometimes did his public duties. He was the only adult I have ever known who took advantage of being grown-up as children in the nursery often plan to do but very rarely carry out when the time comes. When he felt like kicking and screaming and pulling the cloth off the table, he profited from the fact that there was no longer a Nanny at hand to smack him to put up some naughtiness that was as gratifying.

On this august occasion he gratified his impulses by making a speech in which he expressed his deep-seated loathing of the whole idea of giving prizes for books, and recorded his melancholy conviction that committees always gave such prizes to the last books that deserved them. It was my duty to propose a vote of thanks to him for this embarrassing effort, and I rose to do it feeling certain that nothing I could say would come very effectively, for obviously he was out to enjoy the occasion, and moreover a tribute from me, and the likes of me, was not likely to please one who notoriously represented the brazenly official side of letters and revelled in his post as Librarian of the House of Lords as much for the sake of the Lords involved as of the books.

Honestly, but without hope of evoking a response, I recorded the fact that my generation owed a tremendous debt to Sir Edmund Gosse for his exquisite book, *Father and Son,* in which, by describing his relationship with his father, Philip Gosse, the naturalist, he set down as fearlessly as ever D. H. Lawrence or any of our modernists have done, the mingling of love and hate which a child feels for its parents. I did not complete my thought by adding that I felt it extremely odd that anybody who could produce such a masterpiece of literature should have come to regard literature as a minor branch of the Civil Service which, well cultivated, leads to invitations to the Royal Garden Parties; but it passed through my mind. I was, therefore, puzzled when he came up to me as soon as the proceedings were over and asked me if I had really meant what I had said and if *Father and Son* had really meant much to my generation. I had, when he came up, been talking to another writer of my own age. We turned to each other in surprise and stammered that, of course, it had. He amazingly said, "I had no idea. . . ." I would have put it down as one of the curious cases where widely read authors cannot realize that anybody reads them—of which the star example is Thomas Hardy, who never could quite accept the fact that he had enormous authority and always submitted his work to editors in quite honest expectation that he might possibly be rebuffed—had I not tumbled on a much more interesting spiritual drama than that by adding that I had also read and liked his one novel of fiction, *The Secret of Narcisse,* and had read it over and over again when I was a schoolgirl. That really astonished him, and he asked eagerly, if I had read it since I had grown up. Yes, I had. And so had the other writer. And did we still think it was good? Of course, we did; and head and shoulders above what was being written at the time. He was so pleased that I should have suspected he was laughing if his old age had not betrayed an obvious emotion.

I could not understand why until a year or two later when, in making researches for a lecture, I turned up some literary papers of the early 'nineties and saw at a glance what had happened. Young Gosse had made a reputation as a critic during the 'eighties. He had then emerged with his first essay in fiction. The cheap and obvious thing which the small mind longs to say of a critic's creative work is that though he can pick holes in other people's work he himself lacks the vital spark which enables them to

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do that work, such as it is. The small minds of 1892 said that cheap and obvious thing over and over again about the charming and graceful *Secret of Narcisse*. Gosse, being the diffident creature the home described in *Father and Son* had made him, believed them. He was more likely to do so for the reason that, being an inflexibly honest man who had never written a malicious review in his life, he imagined that all other people were as high-minded. He had evidently accepted the verdict that he had manifested a complete inability to write fiction; and he never made another attempt. His irritability proceeded in part from the damming of a creative impulse in him that ought to have had free play; and his concern for titles and rank was not plain snobbery but was a pathetic attempt to associate himself with eminence of others when the eminence that was appropriate to himself had been judged out of his reach. I have never known a more startling example of how potent a vileness spite is once it is admitted in criticism; nor a more convincing proof that a characteristic which seems considered by itself unlovable can be the consequence of a drama that, fully comprehended, compels pity and liking.

* * *

Finally, I want to give good news to all teachers of literature by directing their attention to a book which will be of immense service to them. *The Making of Literature* by R. A. Scott-James. Not long ago I promised to give a lecture to the City Literary Institute on the history of literary criticism, and felt light-hearted as I did it, since a literature teacher who was also a genius (one Mr. Bridge, of Edinburgh) had induced me in my schooldays to read Aristotle and Sir Philip Sidney and Ben Jonson and Dryden and Addison and Hazlitt; and later, during a long illness, I read the complete works of Sainte-Beuve and Taine. The moderns have necessarily been my concern in later years. "This," said I, "will be child's play." It was not. I had at one time thirty books on my desk for reference. Moreover I had to rely entirely on my own memory for the scheme of the lecture. I had to say: "Well, what happened after Ben Jonson? Who was the next person to say anything vital about the functions and technique of literature? Was it Dryden? I suppose it was Dryden." For it oddly happens that (so far as England is concerned, at any rate) there are no textbooks on the subject; none at all. There are innumerable histories of literature, almost as many as there are waste-paper baskets. There are books on esthetics. But there are no books which watch the self-consciousness of literature through the ages.

I had, therefore, nothing by which to check my personal view of the subject, until the very day before my lecture I came on this book by Mr. Scott-James, published over here by Martin Secker, and in America by Henry Holt. It is made up of twenty lectures which Mr. Scott-James gave to the students of London University in connection with the Diploma of Journalism, and it has, as well as the widest scholarship and great decorum of presentation, that tact in dealing with the human attention which is the secret of good teaching and lecturing. I found that wherever I differed from him in handling the material, I was wrong. I insisted on including some of the ideals on literature from Schiller's correspondence, and it was a mistake. They were far too fussy and hair-splitting for people who had not a ground-plan of the broader principles of literary criticism laid down in their minds. It gives, too, a feeling that I think it is grand for the young to have: a feeling of literature as an organic part of man, which must alter as he alters, so that we never know what it is going to be up to next, and may make shocking fools of ourselves if we are too conservative.

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RAILROAD LINGO

A STORY IN DIALECT—WITH AN ESSAY ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE RAILS

by Grover Jones

"So YOU'RE a hump-brakey, eh? Well, that's a helluva let-down for a guy that's been a T. M. in his day. But I wouldn't squawk about it if I was you. Look at them wheel monkeys hoppin' around. Do you think the Dinger is goin' to put you in their class? Not if he knows his racket he ain't!

"Come over here in the shade of this bad order and I'll tell you what bad luck really is. You may not know it, Snake, but you're lookin' at a Stinger that was once in line to ride the cushions. If it hadn't been for a student tallow-pot—but I'll tell you about it:

"I've got Forty-four and she's a hot-shot. We're due out of St. Louie at three-thirty with five minute runnin' time ahead of Number Two. Before we leave the yards I take a run up to the calliope to match watches with the hoghead. I'm surprised to find a student tallow-pot up in the cab takin' orders from the bakehead. He's spadin' diamonds with his feet together and hittin' everything but the firebox. I recognize him as the young punk who was a mud hop in the yard where I once made up trains.

"'What the hell!' I says to the hogger. 'This is a manifest and there ain't no place for an acrobat! Get out of that cab!'

"'G'wan back to the crummy and bury your head!' grins the hogger. 'It's the kid's first break and you ain't goin' to start him out in life with a hot-box.'

"I went back grumblin'. I'm just as superstitious as my old man who used to tickle a wood-burner on the B. & O. Let me wake up in the mornin' with my pillow bent double and I'll turn in a sick order rather than make the run. I talk it over with the rear shack but he sides in with the stude so I give in and highball her out of the yards.

"Two minutes later we pull a lung out of a freezer and have to shove the bad order onto a passing track. That's bad news number one.

"Ten miles out of Louie the hoghead whistles for brakes. I run up to the head-end and find the stude on his back bleedin' at the mouth. Hemorrhage, the smoke agent says. That's number two.

"The hogger lets go of his boiler handle and gets down to help us. He takes one look at the bleedin' kid and goes into a dead faint.

"Now you know the rule, Snake: nobody can paddle a boiler but a swell-head. But we're just two minutes ahead of Number Two and that rattler goes so fast she only touches the joints. I got to do somethin' and do it quick.

"'Take 'em back to the crummy,' I says to the two shacks. 'I'll run this stack-o'-rust!'

"'But you can't do that!' squawks the bakehead, 'it's against the rules!'

"'To hell with the rules!' I replies. 'That kid needs a doctor and the nearest one is at

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the railroad hospital in Waverley Junction. If you don't want a croppy on your hands, start feedin' this goat black diamonds!'

"I give the old boiler the prod and take up the slack in the train, then I begin beatin' her on the back. We're goin' so fast I can look back and see the door in the hack. But I ain't satisfied. I drop her down in the corner and she stays right off the track. The tallow-pot is doin' back flips and the stack-o'-rust is shootin' sky rockets. We're goin' so fast the scenery looks like one place.

"Just outside Waverley Junction is the intersection of our road and the B. & A. I'm hopin' the board is with me but it ain't. And just to the right of me a B. & A. drag is snakin' its way to the crossin'.

"I wipe the clock but my train is shakin' too many ties. She disobeys me completely. The tallow-pot sees what's comin' and joins the birds. I try to follow suit but before I can let go of the boiler handle there's a string of soft coal cars around my neck.

"Boy, you never saw anything like it! The whole mess looked like sky-writin' on the ground; a swell two-weeks job for every big hook in the country, exceptin' the narrow gauge, of course.

"But standin' on the track within a stone's throw of the hospital is our crummy and I come out of the coal dust in time to see the shacks and the hogger carryin' the kid over to the bone bender's.

"'Oke!' I says to myself. 'Who cares about railroads anyhow? Maybe that kid'll grow up some day to be a second baseman. Let the Super say anything to me and I'll smack him down.'

"Well, the Super did! He was there five minutes after the wreck and he found me lookin' for my pipe in the overturned boiler. By the time I've taken one breath, he's taken three—and it would have shocked you to have heard the words that came out between.

"I thought the most I'd get would be thirty days and thirty brownies but darned if he didn't fire me off the road.

"'And what's more!' he screamed, 'I'll fix it so you'll never work another road in this country!'

"'Is that so?' I says, sarcastic-like. 'I'm no deadhead, brother, and I'm always good for a job on the C. & M. And, furthermore,' I says, 'when that kid brother of yours gets out of the hospital you can tell him that I said you was a dirty ——!'

"And to show my contempt for him, I walked away singin':

'Oh, the B. & O.
And the C. & E. I.,
Go right beside my door.
And I always get
A cinder in my eye!'"

* * *

Ever since the first railroad train was preceded by a flag waver, to insure protection for the pedestrian, the railroad man has been coining words to fit his occupation. Probably, the first name given his engine was The Hog. In those days its fuel was wood—and a most gluttonous appetite it had. In the yards it is known as The Goat, from butting and shoving cars around. The Boiler, The Stack-o'-Rust, and The Calliope are understandable nicknames to anyone who has seen a railroad engine.

The engineer is labelled a Hoghead, a Hogger or a Swell-head. The last title is the penalty for a past idiosyncrasy, when he believed he was a little better than his associates.

The fireman has many names, some of which will not bear repeating. He is a Tallow-pot, a Smoke-agent, a Clinker-boy or a Bakehead. If he is an apprentice fireman he is known as a Student Tallow-pot.

A Reptile or a Snake is a yard switchman. That is merely a general classification to distinguish him from the brakeman out of the yards, who blushes with pride when referred to as a Stinger.

A Stinger may be a Rear-Shack or a Head-Shack, depending on his duties. One takes

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care of the rear-end of the train and the other handles the front. There is no danger of being struck down if you call either a Mule.

A Snake has many jobs. If he's a Hump-brakey he handles the cars rolled onto a series of tracks placed on a slight incline. The engine shoves them "over the hump" and it is his job to handle the brakes.

As a Pin-puller, he is a helper in the yards with the rather dangerous job of coupling and uncoupling cars.

The conductor is politely addressed as the O.R.C. (Order of Railway Conductors). He may be cursed roundly by his crew for some untoward action but nobody thinks of stigmatizing the name of that much-desired position. Every brakeman is always hoping that some day he may "wear brass buttons" (become a freight conductor) and, in time, "ride the cushions" (become a passenger conductor).

The superintendent is known only as the Super. It is he who doles out the proper punishment for flagrant or unintentional violations of the rules. There is no excuse among railroad men for the jeopardizing of human life. Like the schools of America, the railroads have a merit and demerit system. An employe's promotion is based entirely on his record, and that record is a written thing.

If the Superintendent metes out a punishment of "thirty days and thirty brownies", the culprit knows that he will be off the payroll for the next thirty days and will have thirty demerits marked up against his record. But, should he break the highest law in railroading—ignoring the red lantern or the man with the red flag—it means instant dismissal with little likelihood of securing work on any other road.

A yardmaster—known from coast-to-coast as a Dinger or a Ringmaster—has a localized job. He superintends the movement of trains in the yards. He knows every List—freight and its destination—and with the assistance of mud hops (yard clerks) he oversees the classification yard. It is there the cars are put into station order. When a train is made up by the switchmen (this work is referred to as "busting up a cut") the road crew couples on its engine and crummy (caboose) and carries the freight to its destination. Before he leaves the yards, the conductor gives the telegraph operator a Consist. This is a list of the freight he is carrying. The list is telegraphed ahead.

A Drag is a slow freight, such as a coal train. If it is a time-card train, that is, running on schedule, it is a Highball, a Redball or a Manifest. In the latter case it carries perishables.

Wheel Monkeys, or Car Toads, are car inspectors. If they discover a Bad Order—a car with a hot box or one that has pulled a lung, that is, a draw-bar pulled out—they order it into the hole (side-track). It is a lowly job, remuneratively, but one on which thousands of lives depend.

When an engineer talks of beatin' her on the back or droppin' her down in the corner, he means, simply, that his engine is making fast time. On a coal burner, nobody knows this better than the fireman. Throwing diamonds (coal) in the firebox is a job for only the experienced.

Should the engineer "wipe the gauge" or "clean the clock", it means that he has brought the train to a sudden stop by setting the air brakes.

The railroad man's fund of phrases is limitless, and they are phrases known only to him. Here are a few:

A lead:	A main yard track from which the siding tracks branch off.
Back in:	To back in on a side track.
Burned a journal:	A neglected hot-box causes a journal to break.
Caboose bounce:	A train made up of just the engine and caboose. Also spoken of as running light.

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Call for the board: When a train approaches the station, the engineer sounds four blasts of the whistle. If the track is clear, the station man lowers the semaphore.

Called on the carpet: When a violator of rules is sent for by his superior.

Carry the green: Green flags on an engine denote a following second section. The second section does not show green.

Deadheading: When a crew, or individual, is sent from one point to another while off duty.

Flagged a block: When an automatic signal is out of order it goes to "danger" or "stop", in which case a train can proceed only by sending a flagman ahead to the next signal to stop oncoming trains.

Foul the main: When a car is on a siding too close to the main track.

Freezers: Refrigerator cars.

Fumble the hoop: Orders are handed to passing trains on a hoop and sometimes a trainman's outstretched arm misjudges the distance.

Had to double: When an engine is unable to make a grade, the train is broken and two trips take it "over the hump".

Headender: A head-on collision.

Head in: To pull into a siding.

Held up by the blue flag: Sometimes car inspectors hang a blue flag on the front car and the train is held until the flag is removed.

Helper: An extra engine to assist a train on grades.

Highball: A signal to leave.

Hit the dirt: An unceremonious leave-taking of the train in an emergency.

Johnston bar: The reverse lever on an engine.

On the ties: A derailment.

Pick up: Getting a car, or cars, at a station.

Pull the air: When a trainman is unable to signal the engineer to stop, he opens an air valve which automatically sets the air brakes.

Red board: When the semaphore is not lowered a train has to stop for orders.

Rip track: A track in the back shops where cars are to be wrecked or broken up.

Rule *G*: In all railroad rule books, prohibiting the use of intoxicants.

Seniority: Meaning how long they have been in service; sometimes referred to as "whiskers".

Set out: Leaving a car, or cars, at a station.

Spot a car: To place a car in the proper place for loading or unloading.

Squirrel a car: Climbing to the top of a train to set hand brakes.

Tailender: A rear-end collision.

Tie up: To go off duty for a rest.

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A FORGOTTEN CREATOR OF GHOSTS

JOSEPH SHERIDAN LE FANU, POSSIBLE INSPIRER OF THE BRONTËS

by Edna Kenton

He foresaw that the proprietors of Stayes would do him very well. In his bedroom at a country house he always looked first at the books on the shelf and the prints on the walls; he considered that these things gave a sort of measure of the culture and even of the character of his hosts. Though he had but little time to devote to them on this occasion a cursory inspection assured him that if the literature, as usual, was mainly American and humorous, the art consisted neither of the water-color studies of the children nor of "goody" engravings. . . . There was the customary novel of Mr. Le Fanu for the bedside; the ideal reading in a country house for the hours after midnight. Oliver Lyon could scarcely forbear beginning it while he buttoned his shirt.—From "The Liar," *by* HENRY JAMES.

TO A SEARCHER in the barren field of Le Fanuana, who had run through innumerable indexes of literary "Histories" and "Studies" on the steadily diminishing chance of finding anywhere even bare mention of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, it was almost a shock to come upon a sturdy little row of figures following his name in one of the volumes of *The Cambridge History of English Literature.* Was it that in this dignified compendium of criticism he was at last recognized, "revived"? But no! Only in the light of the ever-projected Brontës did he shine on a few of their particular pages.

Straight into Charlotte Brontë's centenary year—1916, when this thirteenth volume of *The Cambridge History* was issued—Professor A. A. Jack, of the University of Aberdeen, who wrote the Brontë chapter, shot a little shell which somehow failed to explode. With a theory of his own regarding the "sources" of *Jane Eyre,* he suggested that "the tale of actual and intended bigamy which Sheridan Le Fanu contributed to the *Dublin University Magazine* * in 1839" might have been at once the source of the famous "plot" and the source of Thackeray's vague disturbance over *Jane Eyre's* reminiscent quality.

It is Le Fanu's odd fate that his name should pass. Suggestions wilder than this have sufficed to rally the Brontëans for annihilation of the unfortunate suggestor; witness that naïve victim of Irish amiability, The Rev. William Wright, who looked up *The Brontës in Ireland,* or that unlucky prey of the deadly parallel who "proved" that Branwell Brontë wrote *Wuthering Heights.* But Professor Jack's stimulating chapter on Le Fanu's possible influence has passed unchallenged. Today *Wuthering Heights* is more sacrosanct than *Jane Eyre.* Yet, if he had gone further, as he might have, and had suggested probable origins in *The Purcell Papers* for Emily Brontë's "greatest villain in fiction", Le Fanu's predestined obscurity

* "A Chapter: Being the Tenth Extract from the Legends of the Late Francis Purcell, P.P., of Drumcoolagh."

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would doubtless have worked to hush even that profane pronouncement into silence. However, a book might be written (let us hope it will not be) on the correspondences between *The Purcell Papers* of Le Fanu and the Brontë novels.

Surely the unmitigated famelessness of Sheridan Le Fanu can be ranked among the outstanding curiosities of literature. One of the literal "best sellers" of the 1860-1880's, he has disappeared even from cursory addenda to Victorian literary history. Author of some of the really remarkable ghost stories of our literature, he is remembered today only by the "occultists"—the people, by the way, who really recognize a really ghostly tale. You will find his "Green Tea", his "Carmilla" and his "The Room in the Dragon Volonte" referred to still in occult literature. But if you should glance through Miss Dorothy Scarborough's exhaustive work, *The Supernatural in Fiction,* you will search in vain for even passing mention of Sheridan Le Fanu as a craftsman of parts in the delicate art of transferring shadows to the printed page; and this omission from her extensive survey is high evidence of how completely he has passed away from the literary earth. Curious are the fates of little books and little writers —most curious of all sometimes when they are called great. Le Fanu was not a great writer, but he wrote a few great ghost stories. And even as the "sensation" author of *Uncle Silas, The House by the Churchyard, Checkmate* and *Wylder's Hand,* to mention no others of a list so famous fifty years ago, his unqualified passing within a half-century's short span is hardly comprehensible.

Only one biographer—and he a personal friend—has tried to keep his name alive. Alfred Perceval Graves wrote Le Fanu's obituary in 1873 for the *Dublin University Magazine* which Le Fanu had owned. He wrote the preface for *The Purcell Papers,* the legends of the "wonderful priest of Drumcoolagh," collected from the old *Dublin University Magazine* files of 1838-1839 and published in 1880. In 1886 he prefaced the posthumous *Poems,* and in the 'nineties assisted Le Fanu's son, Richard Brinsley Sheridan Le Fanu, in editing a short-lived series of reprints of the father's work with illustrations by the son. In 1904 Mr. Graves published another edition of the *Poems* with another preface and, as recently as 1913, in his *Irish Literary and Musical Studies,* he gave many pages to what is probably his final tribute to his friend—a study pathetically reminiscent of all his others. He had so early said it all. Only a brother, William Le Fanu, in his autobiography, has contributed further to the picture of this charming Irish gentleman, littérateur, raconteur and occultist of old Dublin.

In the *Lives* of the multitudinous Sheridans we find him now and then. Contemporary of all the great Victorians (he lived from 1814 to 1873) his blood was that of some of the greatest English lights, social and otherwise, of his age. Through his grandmother, Alicia, daughter of "Tom" and Frances Sheridan and sister of Richard Brinsley and Elizabeth, he was direct descendant of a family whose members have kept unbroken claim to fame for two hundred years. The Sheridan connection was double, for the two Sheridan sisters married two Le Fanu brothers. In Le Fanu's Merrion Square home in Dublin hung a dozen Sheridan portraits, all his by inheritance; "Tom" Sheridan, actor, father of the brood; Frances Sheridan, author of the Eighteenth Century *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Biddulph,* with their children and their children's children. Richard Brinsley Sheridan's granddaughters, the famous "Sheridan Sisters" of London when Victoria was its girl-queen, were cousins of the Dublin Sheridan-Le Fanus—Caroline, the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Georgiana, loveliest of all the Duchesses of Somerset, and Helen, Lady Dufferin. The family ramifications stretched back and forth across the Irish Sea, and the whole family, all sides of it, wrote, from the old mother lioness down.

No wonder, then, that Sheridan Le Fanu scribbled from his earliest years. His *métier* was the mysterious, when it was not the

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ghostly and the lurid, and for a score of years, from the 1860's on, he was read enormously on both sides of the Atlantic, for he was issued in America as fast as he was published in England. But, famous contemporary of other famous "mystery" writers—Collins, Braddon *et al.*—their names remain on any roll call of the Victorians while his is literally obliterated. His one-time vogue is noted by a no less meticulous recorder of his time than Henry James. In "The Liar", one of three tales published in 1889 under the title of *A London Life,* Mr. James remarks that, upon his hero's arrival at Stayes to paint Sir David's portrait, he looked, for omens and signs, at the pictures and the books, and they promised well: "There was the customary novel of Mr. Le Fanu for the bedside; the ideal reading in a country house for the hours after midnight."

For Le Fanu, better than most of his lurid school, could "write"; more than others of his school, with the exception of Bulwer-Lytton, he was "occult"; his backgrounds were distinguished, they were thick with medieval lore and his pages were whimsical as well as lurid.

He had, however, a special gift for dealing with luridities. He was a real forerunner of the "psychic horror school" which Arthur Machen later on was to proceed to make his own and, after Machen, Blackwood. Why Le Fanu's "Dr. Hesselius," whose "case histories" furnish the material for the ghostly tales of *In a Glass Darkly,* does not lead the long modern list of "psychic doctors" in fiction is another mysterious mischance. His "Notes" on maladies of the mind were pioneer excursions into a field much over-cultivated today; he is the true father of Machen's Dr. Raymond, of Blackwood's Dr. Silence, even of that great degreeless, lay scientist, Mr. Sherlock Holmes himself.

In his *Victorian Novelists* (1906), Louis Benjamin includes Sheridan Le Fanu, but all mistakenly devotes his rather shallow, critical attention to the "sensation" novels. This irritating study, the later Graves essays and the disregarded niche Professor Jack hollowed for him beside the Brontë sisters in *The Cambridge History of English Literature* are the only Twentieth Century recognitions of Le Fanu's life and works that a tolerably comprehensive search has salvaged from the modern flood of printed matter. Others may have been missed, but his exclusion from Miss Scarborough's exhaustive research into supernatural fiction, Le Fanu's veritable field, is fair evidence that Sheridan Le Fanu, for all modern cognizance, might never have lived at all.

II

If, in that pathetic list of Charlotte Brontë's reading sources for 1829, set down in Mrs. Gaskell's extraordinary *Life,* the old *Dublin University Magazine* had been listed with *Blackwood's,* or if it had figured in a later catalogue of the Haworth parsonage library, this at least can be asserted fairly—Professor Jack would not have been the first to suggest, in 1916, *The Purcell Papers* as a plot source for *Jane Eyre.* Long before her centenary year the extent of Charlotte Brontë's indebtedness to Sheridan Le Fanu would have been the subject of more than one profound *opus.* It is inexplicable, however, that Professor Jack's theory of sources stops short with one of *The Purcell Papers* and one of the Brontë novels; for, the further the comparison is carried, the stronger his case becomes. But, midway in his chapter on the Brontës, he springs, with disconcerting suddenness, a merely partial "case". He quotes a letter of Charlotte's to Mr. Williams in the autumn of 1847, that one which refers to Thackeray's well-known remark on the "reminiscent quality" of the *Jane Eyre* plot and carries her own asseveration of her belief that it was original. Then he comments as follows:

> Charlotte Brontë's possible forgetfulness, if she had seen the story, and Thackeray's dim recollection are equally explicable. The tale of actual and intended bigamy which Sheridan Le Fanu contributed to the *Dublin University Mag-*

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azine in 1839 was just one of those stories eminently adapted to floating in the back of the mind. In the strange fictions of Le Fanu the reader's feelings are deeply moved without his either seeing the actual occurrences face to face or believing them to be real. . . . While nothing could be more probable than that the author of *The Irish Sketch Book* and *Barry Lyndon* had read this story, it is clear that Charlotte could have had access to it. . . . Charlotte Brontë herself, in requesting Messrs. Aylett & Jones to send out review copies of the *Poems,* mentions alone among Irish papers the *Dublin University Magazine*. A favorable notice appeared and in writing the editor to thank him for it, 6th October, 1846, she signs herself "Your grateful and constant reader." Later, 9th October, 1847, she makes a special request that Messrs. Elder & Smith should send *Jane Eyre* to the same review. It is not improbable that a forgotten remembrance of Le Fanu's story, read years before, supplied what was never a fertile inventiveness with the machinery it wanted.

Le Fanu's story of "actual and intended bigamy", *A Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family,* the tenth of *The Purcell Papers,* is the story of Fanny Richardson, told by herself and set down by Father Purcell. Lord Glenfallen pretends to marry her and takes her to Cahergillagh Court which boasted legends in plenty, with an old housekeeper, Martha, for teller of tales. Martha's first recital concerned the ominous fate of Lady Jane. There is a mysterious part of the castle which Fanny is forbidden to visit, but its mysterious dweller visits her, announcing herself as the true Lady Glenfallen and demanding that Fanny depart. This and succeeding visits Lord Glenfallen explains by saying that the lady is mad. She is blind, not mad; but at the end there is a murderous attack upon Fanny in her bedroom which is more than a little reminiscent of many things. The blind woman is hanged; Lord Glenfallen cuts his throat in mania and Fanny retreats to a convent. So much—and so very little—for one of *The Purcell Papers* in a Brontëan light. Professor Jack does much more with it; but nothing, of course, can convey the same delightfully piquant analogy as the Le Fanu story itself, to which, if he can obtain it today, the reader is cheerfully referred.

III

Now there are many reasons why the anonymous *Purcell Papers,* all of them, should have keenly interested the Brontë sisters in their fanciful girlhood. The tales were "Irish", they were "ghostly", above all, they were filled to running over with "coincidences", "correspondences", "identifications". Brontë family names abounded—Patricks and Emilys and Janes and Marys and Hughs. If Lady Glenfallen had for servant an "old Martha", so had the Haworth parsonage. If Father Purcell, "the wonderful priest of Drumcoolagh", lived in a mythical parish, Patrick Brontë, priest of Haworth, had served his tutor apprenticeship in the literal Irish parish of Drumgooland.

Professor Jack's suggested sources for plots end with *A Tyrone Family* and *Jane Eyre.* But speculation can go further and fare more abundantly with others of *The Purcell Papers* and their correspondences with Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights.* For the Second, Fifth and Sixth of the *Papers* bear the oddest resemblances to that novel with its "greatest villain", and they too are tales "eminently adapted to floating in the back of the mind". In each of them there is a Lady Emily, and in each of them there is an arch villain. In each of them there is a superlatively lonely house, and in two of them the revengeful inferior becomes the brutal master. In the first, *The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh,* there are three sisters, the second of whom, Lady Emily, lives wth her husband at Castle Ardagh. Sir Robert has a mysterious valet, whose malignant will dominates his master's fortunes and who at last destroys him. The second tale, *A Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess,* has the forced-marriage plot, wickedly manoeuvered by Sir Arthur T—n, father of an Emily and

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an Edward, and uncle of a Margaret, sincerely intent upon acquiring his niece's fortune either through her marriage with his son or by her murder. Murder it is, but all mistakenly not of the heroine—Emily is slain, and Margaret ends her story in the very mood of the end of *Wuthering Heights,* the wish that Emily "had been spared and that in her stead *I* were mouldering in the grave, forgotten and at rest".

But *The Bridal of Carrigvarah* yields the most of reminiscent likenesses, of suggestions for Heathcliffe's villainy, revenge and love, of "correspondences" and "identifications". Here also is a Lady Emily, sadly figuring as a minor deserted character.

It will be recalled that the old servant, Ellen Dean, tells the tangled tale of *Wuthering Heights,* most of it, of Heathcliffe's servitude and later mastership. In *The Bridal of Carrigvarah,* Ellen Heathcote, daughter of a stern father, has at the outset two lovers, Richard O'Mara and Edward Dwyer, the latter a servant of the O'Maras, malignant, revengeful, plotting their downfall. Having forced his young master into insincere assertion of his indifference to Ellen, Dwyer dickers for Heathcote's farm lease and his daughter. Refused both, he muses thus:

> Insolent young spawn of ingratitude and guilt, how long must I submit to be trod upon thus; and yet why should I murmur—his day is even now declining. . . . But I must wait—I am but a pauper now. . . . Were I independent once, I'd make them feel my power, and feel it *so,* that I should die the richest or the best avenged servant of a great man that has ever been heard of.

Through Dwyer's devices, O'Mara, though betrothed to Lady Emily, marries Ellen Heathcote secretly, "madly, fervently, irrevocably in love", and hides her in the lonely Lodge, set in bleak and heathy hills. Again, through Dwyer's villainy, O'Mara is challenged by Lady Emily's brother and slain. While believing herself deserted, Ellen gives birth to a child and at its death sends for "the wonderful priest of Drumcoolagh", who finds the Lodge as dreary as ever Ellen Dean found Heathcliffe's *Wuthering Heights.* Ellen Heathcote dies, glad to know she was widowed, not deserted, and Dwyer completes the overthrow of the hated O'Maras.

"Correspondences" are, of course, a most delicate matter of shades, even shades of shades; things to be felt, not seen. Professor Jack's launching of his little boat of surmise, on so cool an ocean of documents as make up *The Cambridge History of English Literature,* argues strongly for the strength of his feeling. Taking his tip and playing it farther, his "measure of correspondence," as he calls it, between *The Purcell Papers* and the Brontë novels is largely increased. There is also, for the added amusement of "connections", Le Fanu's *Uncle Silas,* published nine years after Charlotte Brontë's death, but of interest notwithstanding. This is no more than a three-volume extension of *The Secret History of an Irish Countess,* with many names changed and with a governess, Madame de la Rougierre, added to brim the cup of villainy. On *Uncle Silas* Sheridan Le Fanu won his first wide fame. It is a queer old book, yet queerer books have survived, by their titles at least, to keep the memories of their authors green. But *Uncle Silas* too has passed—until the other day when it was included in an "old novels" series. And, once again, Le Fanu's fate of frustration has been operative. Since he was to be reprinted, why *Uncle Silas,* instead of those "occult" old tales by which alone, and by the smallest of small groups, the author has been remembered!

IV

It was some years ago, during an evening of talk on "horror" tales (the cataleptic, the vampiric, the "buried alive", the tangible ghostly and the intangible obsessionistic) that a title, "Green Tea," floated suddenly to the surface. Just the title, nothing more. I recalled it (no one else had ever heard of it) as a tale, vaguely, of a physician, a clergy-

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man and an obsession—a little black monkey visible always by a halo of reddish light. Nothing of the story remained—only the impression of its effect, which is indeed all any old forgotten tale can ask. Most of us who like to read can recall "the look of the page," but this too had vanished.

A few days later the arm of coincidence reached across an old bookstall and laid a finger on *Ignorant Essays,* by Richard Dowling (1888). Both book and author were unknown, but a note of "authority" rang out on the contents page: "The Only Real Ghost in Fiction", and the book fell open at the fifteenth page and at this paragraph:

> I am very bad at dates, but I think Le Fanu wrote "Green Tea" before a whole community of Canadian nuns were thrown into the most horrible state of nervous misery by excessive indulgence in that drug. Of all the horrible tales that are revolting, "Green Tea" is I think, the most horrible. The bare statement that an estimable and pious man is haunted by the ghost of a monkey is at first blush funny. But if you have not read this story read it and see how little of fun there is in it. The horror of the tale lies in the fact that this apparition of a monkey is the only *probable* ghost in fiction. . . .

Sheridan Le Fanu, of course, and *In a Glass Darkly!* I saw again the little volume of ghostly tales of which "Green Tea" was one. I read on, and, in face of Mr. Richard Dowling's naïve summary of it, interest lapsed. It seemed too sufficiently obvious; I explained its enduring impression by the surmise that a youthful faith in the goodness of all clergymen must have been extreme; better never go back to the story itself.

But later I was to go back to its author for other reasons, and I reread "Green Tea" and the other case histories of Dr. Hesselius. Le Fanu's Father Purcell of Drumcoolagh may or may not lie back of *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights,* but his Dr. Hesselius was John the Baptist for the little gods of later fiction—the psychic doctors. (Balzac's Dr. Desplein is the great father of them all!)

"In Dr. Martin Hesselius," writes his "Watson," a young surgeon frustrated of a great career by the loss of two fingers, "I found my master. . . . His knowledge was immense, his grasp of a case was an intuition. . . . For nearly 20 years I acted as his medical secretary. His immense collection of papers he has left in my care to be arranged, indexed, and bound. His treatment of some of these cases is curious. He writes in two distinct characters. He describes what he saw and heard, as an intelligent layman might, and when in this style of narrative he has seen the patient either through his own hall door to the light of day or through the gates of darkness to the caverns of the dead, he returns upon the narrative, and in the terms of his art and with all the force and originality of genius proceeds to the work of analysis, diagnosis, and illustration."

On these lines precisely "Green Tea" is done, in letters to a friend, Professor Van Loo of Leyden. These letters trace the strange case of the Rev. Mr. Jennings, a wealthy bachelor clergyman, beginning with Dr. Hesselius's first observations of him at an evening party.

> "Mr. Jennings," writes the good doctor, "has a way of looking sidelong upon the carpet as if his eye followed the movements of something there. This, of course, is not always. It occurs only now and then. But often enough to give a certain oddity to his manner, and in this glance travelling along the floor there is something both shy and anxious."

Mr. Jennings drinks too much green tea, but his troubles are not born of that. Later he brings his hallucination to the doctor, who traces its developments, observing, after some time, "He has not yet given me his full and unreserved confidence". He never does, and goes down to a bitter death. And, after Dr. Hesselius has seen him "through the gates of darkness to the caverns of the dead," he "returns upon the narrative" and sums up.

No bad pattern, this, by which to cut one's dark psychologic cloth, in 1872. Dr. Hesselius was a gold mine for any novelist inter-

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ested in the psychologic and the occult. In this German physician and metaphysician of the mind and soul, Le Fanu had hit upon more than a cunning device in the way of a reservoir for learning, intuition, magic or psychology to be tapped at will; he had hit upon a character as well, one that, had he lived to work with it, might have towered high in the heavens of ghostly fiction. But he had come upon it too late; he died the following year. The rest is silence, complete mysterious silence. He was famous; he was read; he "sold"; he was of the Sheridan blood; he was filially reprinted no more than a quarter century after his death, and that death is only half a century back. But his very name is lost to present-day historians of his age. His novels, so multitudinously printed and reprinted, have simply disappeared. They are as rare on old bookstalls as black swans on old lakes.

Sheridan Le Fanu himself was "rare," after his wife's death, which occurred in 1858. He had been wit and scholar of old Dublin society; but, says Graves:

> From this society he vanished so entirely, that Dublin, always ready with a nickname, dubbed him "The Invisible Prince", and, indeed, he was for a long time almost invisible, except to his family and most familiar friends, unless at odd hours of the evening, when he might occasionally be seen stealing, like the ghost of his former self, between his newspaper office and his home in Merrion Square. Sometimes, too, he was to be encountered in an old, out-of-the-way book shop, pouring over some rare Astrology or Demonology. . . .

If it is ever discovered that the *Dublin University Magazine* of 1838 and 1839 was in the parsonage at Haworth—was even in the little circulating library at Keighley where the Brontë sisters walked for books to read—was even in the libraries of those purgatorial homes where the sisters were sad governesses, Sheridan Le Fanu's *Purcell Papers* may easily become the generating cause of a little literary thunderclap.

Meantime, Dr. Hesselius of "Green Tea" of *In a Glass Darkly* stands as the forerunner of the "soul doctors" so liberally employed by later writers in the supernatural field. On "Green Tea" alone (let pass the rest of his occult tales) Le Fanu, particularly charming descendant of the famous Sheridans, earned his right of way into any studies of the supernatural in fiction. That he has disappeared so completely from lists and records, even from the footnotes, of the Victorians, is so inexplicable as to be of itself almost "supernatural."

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THE PRINTED WORD

by Wilson Follett

FROM DAY TO DAY

THE *Toledo Blade* recently gave four lines to the following dispatch from London:

Twelve-year old Charles Walker sent to King George, convalescing at Bognor, a fish the boy had caught at Brighton.

The sentence would be a passable example of the standard reportorial gambit—necessarily a more or less conventional application of the who-what-when-where formula—but for the sudden last move executed with a piece not hitherto placed on the board. This move is as mystifying as the unannounced introduction of a major character just before the last curtain of a play. The mind lapsing into its comfortable little bath of gratified curiosity is all at once chilled and dazed by introduction of a fresh problem of the utmost irrelevance: in this instance, *Who was "the boy"?*

Probably no one will ever solve the mystery of where newspaper reporters get the extra personæ upon whom they call for performance of the simplest actions. Hardly any other kind of writer was ever able to produce them out of his sleeve at will, making the innocent paper bristle with four or five actors where the niggardly event itself disclosed but one or two.

President Hoover is reported to have declared at the conference . . . which *the Chief Executive* called . . .

Zane Grey announced yesterday that *the famous author* plans to . . .

There seem to be two reasons why the reporter can hardly bring himself to write the simple pronouns, "he," "she," "it," and "they" in contexts where their antecedents would be unmistakable and their use so natural as to appear wholly inescapable to a non-reporter. The first reason is that the reporter thinks he perceives in such contexts a chance to show off his ingenuity in reference or epithet. It is one of the curiosities of journalism that reporting of the news, so much of which is distinguished by verbal poverty and inane repetition, should light upon such a commonplace area in which to spread and preen itself. Hardly any accomplishment seems to give reporters the glow of self-admiration which they experience in calling the same thing by as many different names as they can think up. Fundamentally, the impulse is a sheer barbaric love of ornament; the extra synonyms are the glass beads and earrings of the reporter's style.

The second reason is that this mode of reference is deemed an unobtrusive and painless way of supplying extra descriptive facts, of insinuating information without exactly stating it, and so reminding the reader of what he ought to know but may not. Unfortunately, the graceful tact of the intention is lost in the grotesqueness of the effect. The mind is exacerbated by a style which is constantly snatching away the one subject of a continuous action and apparently substituting a new subject. The ordinary reader can never see why anyone should want to perform such a cakewalk around the edge of a plain everyday topic instead of walking straight up to it. Hardly any other repor-

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torial trick is so gratuitous an offense against the newspapers' own professed canons of simplicity, clarity and brevity.

Journalism could well afford to confine its search for the purely rhetorical variant to the reporting of athletic events, a good deal of which is done expressly to make a facetious display of the reporter's purely rhetorical fertility rather than to exhibit the actual contest. Reports of baseball games are read as humor by thousands who don't care who played or what the score was, and the comedian who daily entertains them would soon be out of an audience and a job if he stopped referring to Babe Ruth as the home-run king, George Herman, the Nemesis of opposing twirlers and the Sultan of Swat. When accounts of sports are actually written to report the news, as of a game in the World Series, the manner is relatively plain; and when they are written to inform the intelligent spectator what it is that he has just been shouting himself hoarse over, as in the sports extras sold to the crowd emerging from a football game, the manner is plainest of all.

The reporter's inability to use the unadorned pronoun where every consideration calls for it is no bar to his instinct to use it where no consideration calls for it. Nothing can very well call for a pronoun except an antecedent; but the ingenious reporter has evolved his own system of reversing this natural order of things and making the homeless pronoun cry for its antecedent. "Charging that her husband, L—— D——, was found petting another woman in the basement of his pet shop, in ——, Mrs. L—— D—— brought suit . . ." is the beginning of another Toledo item marked "Special to the *Blade*".

However, there is nothing special to any paper in this perverse construction of sentences which, although nearly always composed about trifles, ask to be read twice to be understood once. And all of the great press associations are noticeably addicted to the same pattern:

> The easiest case which they have ever encountered was presented to detectives of the —— station;
>
> After he and his father had lived during the administration of every president of the United States, Samuel T. Culp, 76, died here recently.
>
> That he paid N—— T—— $300 not to report him . . . was the testimony of Rev. A—— M—— in Federal Court Thursday.
>
> Witnesses it was unable to locate today drew the attention of the Case legislative investigating committee.

It is easy to collect similar examples from practically all city and country newspapers. Journals published in cities whose population is over 100,000 probably yield more examples to the page than those published in towns of less than 10,000. Country dailies and weeklies, metropolitan papers and the news-distributing agencies cover the entire continent with these waifs of pronouns.

The unceasing torture of the language for variants and the resort to cart-before-horse pronouns are two of the most annoying defects of the newspaper man's writing. Both seem trifling enough. But consider. Both occur oftener in opening sentences than anywhere else; thousands skim these sentences to every score who read farther and to every individual who reads the editorials; many news items every day, including some fairly important ones from abroad, are cut each to one sentence and so printed. It follows that the newspaper reporter exerts through his opening sentences alone an incalculable force upon the popular notion of how English ought to be written—a greater force, without doubt, than any other printed medium except the headlines. The record of that influence is scattered through books and magazines. The rapid popular writer has, in fact, refined and standardized the newspaper device into one of the three or four stereotyped patterns for beginning his story or instalment. For example:

> In his broad bed, in a huge, well-lighted, ground-floor room of what Mr. Clinch had

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eventually chosen to describe as a classy bungalow-villa with all modern conveniences, and furnished to the limit, Rufus Billop stretched in languid ease.

(Thus, Mr. Harry Leon Wilson in the *Saturday Evening Post.*) It is small wonder that the themes of undergraduates bristle with antecedentless pronouns or that the lower schools make so little headway in teaching young Americans to state what they are talking about before they talk about it—the substratum of common sense and decency under the formal rule that a pronoun follows its antecedent.

The news columns, in their struggle for lavish variety of diction, by no means stop at nouns. Even the New York *Times,* written with a sobriety trenching now and then on stodginess, is capable of dismembering a list of deceased notables into some who "are dead", others who are "gone from us", still others who "will be seen no more" and a fourth group who "have taken the long trail", when no purpose is served beyond that of simple inventory. The minor novelist is naturally heartened in the false pride that causes the characters of his dialogue never by any chance merely to *say* a thing, but always to shrug or frown or wink or gleam or gesticulate it, thus: "'Now I know you for what you are!' he glowered"—even to the hissing of utterances devoid of sibilants. And the student writer is convinced that he is doing something pretty fine when he begins a narrative:

> One night my roommate was writing a letter to his girl, and I was inditing an epistle to my mother, when suddenly . . ."

that novelist in his dozens and that student in his legions are reaping where daily journalism has sown. They are victims, and at the same time propagators, of the worst in reportorial English. Its best, being not so conspicuous in either position or manner, touches them hardly at all.

Of the other purely rhetorical oddities of reporting, some are professional requirements which have little or nothing to do with the reporter's sense of style. One example is the persistent use of the cautious qualification, "alleged whiskey", "supposed rum-runner". The reporter is in no position to do anything about this custom, and over-caution is the right fault for him to cultivate—though on certain papers, notably the *Journal-Courier* of New Haven, he is made to cultivate it to absurdity. Another example is the fashion of adducing at the end of an opening sentence the source of the information given; so that many a sentence neatly packed with information and emphasis, and already as long as the traffic will bear, is made subtly grotesque by the addition of "it was learned today" or "according to a report made by the Chamber of Commerce to the local police authorities". The reporter cannot help this, either. Such mannerisms are not transferable to any other species of writing, and their influence is almost negligible.

Nor need much be said here of the odds and ends of bad diction which are not specially characteristic of the daily paper although some of them are more frequent in news columns than elsewhere. No one knows why all questions must be "as to whether," or how a singular subject gets a plural verb, or how there can be an "and which" before there has been a plain "which", or where the scribes picked up their idea of the sequence of tenses. Illustrations of these four mysteries, all from important daily papers, are:

(1) The main question was *as to whether* it was true that the Federal Reserve bank was in fragments.

(2) Neither the pilot nor the mechanic *were* injured.

The witness said that every line of the affidavits made by Miss Wells and herself regarding the Carmel episode *were* false.

The civil marriage of Carlotta Orlando, daughter of the former Italian premier, and Dr. Franco Bruno Averardi, *were* solemnized today.

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(3) Patrolman John T. McIntyre, almost as husky as the champion, *and whose* post at the Cunard Line pier has made him well known . . .

He is making a spectacular appeal for the highest office in the land, *and for which,* in our opinion, he has not the necessary qualifications.

(4) Some matchmakers . . . decried the tendency of dirt seeking news hounds who *injured* the sport.

He has expressed the belief that the Republicans *would* win.

One proved by an elaborate Biblical quotation that enforcement *could* never be possible until all human beings *were* saved and that this eventuality *was* not a part of the divine scheme.

Officials . . . fear that its publication in a school magazine . . . may be the opening wedge for the publication of similar quotations later on and thus give color to charges that the schools *were* being manipulated for political purposes.

But all such solecisms are in magazines and books as well as newspapers; they are merely a little more frequent in journalistic writing because that is done so fast and revised so little. The same may be said of the nearly omnipresent phrase "center about" (a manifest geometrical and linguistic absurdity); the use of "then" as adjective ("the then New York *Herald,*" writes one of the *Times's* special correspondents); the comparative or superlative degree of absolute words like "unique" and the use of "may" for "can"—this last a tribute to the schoolmarm, who has made war so persistently on the use of "can" for "may" that half the population now uses "may" for both meanings.

Neither is there anything peculiarly journalistic in that widespread American habit, the singular verb with the plural subject. The New York *Sun* has this:

Included in the bridal luggage, it is said, *is* a mink coat worth $10,000, forty-eight dinner and evening dresses, 100 pairs of . . .

Of course, the *Sun's* reporter may be a victim of circumstances, and it is possible that he did not write the sentence as it stands. But someone achieved it, and it is the printed, not the written word that builds up the ruinous consensus of misuse. I am told that the Government lost several millions in impost duties one year because someone printed a hyphen that nobody had written.

There is one impropriety, though, which the newspapers probably originated and which they have certainly disseminated until it has become a national affair: the characteristic modern use of "transpire". The 1925 dictionary on my desk at the moment says of this word what no dictionary will dare say of it a few years hence:

☞ The use of *transpire* in the sense of *happen, occur,* is a misuse, and should be avoided.

Yet what newspaper scribe ever uses it in any other sense? I am not asking a rhetorical question. There really is an answer. Having just awarded a booby prize, let me for once award its opposite. I wish it could be known to the literate part of the United States that in the New York *Times* of September 30, 1928, Section 3, page 7, column 7, Mr. Walter Littlefield appears as sufficiently lacking in Americanism to write: ". . . the State Censorship has allowed to transpire only the information that it was a Republican-Freemasonry plot badly organized and directed from Paris . . ." It would be easy to collect in a few minutes a hatful of examples of any solecism noted in these pages. But one suddenly asked to produce the counterpart of Mr. Littlefield's considerate use of a maltreated dissyllable would hardly know which way to turn.

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AUTHORS AND THE INTERVIEWER

by Dorothea Lawrance Mann

REX BEACH said to me, "If you are a good interviewer, all you need is to see the author". However, since listening to that beguiling statement, I have come to the conclusion that authors know practically nothing of what is expected of an interviewee. Nor did I admit that conclusion until I had interviewed a large number of American and a fair number of English authors.

They expect the interviewer to play the jig and do the dancing, too. They are polite and amiable, and very often only too willing to say what you want them to say. Only, please tell them what that is! They are trustful. In more than one case they have stated frankly that I might make them say just what I pleased and it would be all right with them. The average author—unless at some time in his career he has chanced to be an interviewer himself—has not the faintest idea that the public expect him to be quite as interesting as the characters he creates. In fact, they prefer to think he is a little more interesting —which frequently lays a heavy burden on the interviewer.

There is an appalling uniformity about modern authors. Prosperity has had a levelling effect. They look distressingly like successful business men and women—which, to be sure, they are. The picturesqueness of their days of happy indigence is gone. I am not sure that the public is to be blamed for liking less these successful business men and these women who run their houses on quite conventional lines. The public loved anecdotes of the dear incompetents. And why not? The dear incompetents were much more colorful. An author with a butler is against all the best traditions. Were we not brought up to think that indigence went hand in hand with genius, while prosperity among followers of the arts was a sign that they had sold their souls to Mammon?

The older authors were more picturesque. We have become used to pictures of Tennyson, but imagine running into him tramping the country with his wild, dishevelled look! You'd suspect such a man of poetry at once. His wife is said to have had trouble enough in producing both poet and study in good order when royalties—human ones—dropped in on him. Very likely she suspected that they did not want him too methodical. Philip Guedalla tells the story that Tennyson gave his wife for a birthday present those lines he had just completed for *Guinevere*—

> But hither will I never come again,
> Never lie by thy side, see thee
> No more—

Beautiful lines, but not quite the conventional gift for a wife! Margot Asquith told of being taken to visit him by his younger son, and how he held her on his knee and read her his poetry, demanding to know what bird it was that called, "Maud, Maud, Maud"? When she answered correctly, he recalled with satisfaction that he had made the test

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on another young lady, and had dumped her on the ground when she stupidly answered, "nightingale". That was the way the poets acted in the good old days!

What an interview one might have had with George Eliot! . . . Holman Hunt—to be sure he was an artist, but there is kinship between artists and authors—used to have his dinner parties arranged like the picture of "The Last Supper", because of his fancied resemblance to the pictures of Christ. . . . Whittier walked through College Hall at Wellesley never daring to look to the left nor to the right lest his eyes be polluted by the images of heathen goddesses on every side. . . . Joaquin Miller visited a Greek class and held the book they gave him upside down. . . . James T. Fields made a striking figure on the streets of Boston wearing his great cape coat and his tall hat. . . . Hawthorne was so shy that he insisted on having his publisher, Mr. Ticknor, travel with him. When Mr. Ticknor died on their last journey together, Hawthorne was found dazed and seemingly unable to realize that it could be his friend on whom he had always leaned who lay there dead. He could only reiterate that he should have been the one to go; and, indeed, he did follow Mr. Ticknor in one short month.

It does seem to me that an author might make a little serious effort toward colorfulness, if only for the sake of the interviewer who must go out and tell the public about him. The first author I ever met was Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward, who belonged to the older tradition. Unfortunately I was not interviewing her, for I was not old enough for such things. I was hunting material on anti-vivisection for a college paper. She, I suppose, was willing to take a few moments to influence a young mind in the right direction. At that time I certainly believed everything she said just because she said it, and now I have quite forgotten what she did say. I do remember, however, that as I was leaving she picked up her little lap dog and held him out on both her hands while she bade him look well at me. "That," she told him, "is the young lady who is going to defend you before Wellesley College". She, you understand, realized the value of a picturesque moment. It is the one thing I remember about my visit.

Hamlin Garland is almost the only picturesque-looking author left to us. He still possesses the long hair which was once thought indispensable to male authorship. Alas, that a woman novelist can no longer cut her hair as a badge of her profession! Not so many years ago, when Stefansson walked down Fifth Avenue without a hat, the writing temperament was certainly suggested. Now the fashion has become very common, especially among men with good heads of hair.

Our visiting authors are not quite so conventional as the native Americans. I interviewed St. John Ervine in a theatre where one of his plays was in rehearsal, and which was so dark that I simply spoke to a voice and had, later, to get a picture to find out how he looked. One visiting English author's wife called him on the telephone about once every five minutes while I interviewed him. Possibly she was right in thinking it was sufficient just to see her husband, though to the end I hoped he would say something brilliant. I suspect now that his *mots* have to be paid for! Anyhow, I soon learned to distinguish between the way in which he answered his wife and the contemptuous tone in which he refused bootleggers. Finally she burst into the room and told him in a very stage stage-whisper. "I shall expect you downstairs in just ten minutes!" I had him there! And yet they sometimes call England a man's country!

Alice Williamson (A. M. Williamson) is one of the few present day writers who understands that it is the novelist's business to be unlike the rest of the world. I feel quite certain that she never writes if she can telegraph or cable. She even wired me for my

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telephone number! Once I went shopping with her and after I had translated her English phrases and accent into good American, and at least once had dropped the hint to a too ecstatically interested young man that she was a novelist, I got quite used to looking over my shoulder and seeing a group of delighted salespeople watching our departure regretfully. Wherever Alice Williamson goes that little stir of delighted interest follows. I suppose it is a lack of self-consciousness which makes her do exactly as she feels like doing or say what she feels like saying at the moment. She does not waste time talking about the weather to strangers, she gets straight down to brass tacks and asks them something vital; such as, why they have not married. It is surprising what a difference it makes in the ensuing conversation.

If an author cannot look picturesque, there is still the chance that he might provide a picturesque setting for the interview. Don Marquis turned the waste paper basket upside down and sat on it while I interviewed him. It lent piquancy to the setting—wondering whether or not the basket would survive the strain. Our humorists are so rarely slender!

It is better than nothing to have the author walk the floor while you talk with him. One very prominent American novelist lay on his back and traced patterns in the air with his foot as he talked. Another novelist fascinated me with his contortions before my wood fire, while I wondered what strange shape he could assume next. At length I discovered that he was not vitally concerned in developing new types of balance, but was merely taking care that every part of his anatomy was equally warmed. I have suspected that some authors look decidedly more picturesque when they are actually at work than when they are dressed up to meet the interviewer. However, I have never even had a glimpse of Tarkington's literary bathrobe which so sincerely shocked Bob Holliday a few years ago; but I gather that it still does service during writing bouts. Despite the sceptical trend of the times, there are still writing folk who believe that some special clothes possess a fortunate influence on their work!

A few authors do show ingenuity in selecting unusual places in which to write. A. Hamilton Gibbs has the most delightful writing-house which I have seen. Not every author, however, can find an old stone tower looking a bit like a Viking relic, on his home estate. Major Gibbs has built a room on top of the tower with an outside stairway. The room is all windows, which gives it the feeling of having a ship's outlook, and the blue chair in which he sits while writing is so big that it had to be built inside the room. The chair has a device by which it can hold his typewriter and he can sit at his ease, his feet on the window sill, facing one of the loveliest of New England views. It is an interesting fact that he built the chair facing the best view, because so many other writers fear the distraction of beautiful views. . . . In Tarkington's study at Kennebunkport the windows of his two-story room are so high that you could not possibly sit at the desk and look out of the window. . . . Dorothy Canfield has a little house out in a Vermont field, a house which is even equipped with a stove for winter weather, where she can forget her household. I do not know whether it is immune to visitors, for in Vermont people do not seem to lock their doors and visitors walk right in. . . . Fannie Kilbourne has a New York office where she can keep business hours for her writing and forget that she is the mother of twins.

After all one of the best thrills an author can give you is to let you discover in his home some of the "properties" which have grown familiar to you in his books. Think of discovering that Wallace Irwin's wife actually sleeps in the "golden bed"!

It is a distinct help to have romantic reasons for writing. It lends real color to the interview. C. N. and A. M. Williamson

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wrote their first novel to earn money to return from their honeymoon. It would, however, be a risky plan for most young couples and I should hesitate to recommend it, no matter how stranded they might be! As I recall it William Rose Benét wrote his first novel because he needed to get the house painted. Rex Beach had literary fame rather thrust upon him, for he was doing a good brick business, when he discovered that he would have to choose between two promising careers. Of course, his friends told him not to desert a solid brick business for the uncertainties of literature. But who ever takes the advice of friends anyway?

The very least any author can do for his interviewer is to provide him with a few good colorful anecdotes. Surely there cannot be an author worth his salt who has not known a bit of persecution in his day! At the least he must have one anonymous friend who dogs his footsteps. Scores have been impersonated. There might, of course, be quite an agreeable sensation in being the one to uncloak an impersonator. It is bad enough running into people who have your own name and discovering they have as good a right to it as you. It is not often that two persons of the same name both write, though we do have two David McCords. Imagine the awkwardness of saying, "Yes, I am the writer", and then having to add, "the writer who wrote *Thus and So,* but not *So and Thus*". Basil King used to tell of an impersonator who tried to cash a check at a New York hotel by claiming to be Basil King, the author. Unfortunately he chose a hotel where Mr. King was known. Possibly it was the man's one desperate gesture, for I have never heard a sequel to the story.

Most certainly contemporary authors need to concentrate on providing at least a dash of romance for their interviewers. For, harking back to the glamorous legends of other days, who would be willing to give up the picture of blind Homer begging his bread through the seven cities which were later to claim him, for any commonplace description of a prosperous Greek dictating the *Iliad* to his secretary? Who can say how much Milton's daughters really did for his future reputation when they rebelled at spending their days writing down *Paradise Lost!* And how much more picturesque for an interviewer to have snatched a moment with the harassed actor-playwright at the Mermaid Tavern, than to have been met at his house by Mrs. Shakespeare and the phrase, "We never disturb Mr. Shakespeare when he is writing"!

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FICTION AND IDEAS

by Robert Herrick

Fiction worth reading should contain ideas—adult ideas. I know that this axiom is no longer accepted by our younger novelists, who like to proclaim their emancipation from the past by presenting pictures of an amorphous, meaningless world of accidental phenomena. But the virile creator who desires to live still weaves his dreams in patterns that suggest, if they do not demonstrate, general ideas. I do not hesitate to say that any work of fiction which does not in this way suggest more than it tells is worthless for the adult, or so nearly worthless as to be negligible. Obviously the fresher and the more individual the ideas underlying any fiction, the more arresting it will be. The trouble with much recent American fiction is that the patterns are stale and uninteresting: they fail to engender thought, stimulate imagination. It is odd—inexplicable to me—that we must go to older societies than ours, with conditions much more worn and cramped for the individual, whose literary soil so to speak has been worked for centuries—one might expect to the point of exhaustion—to discover those fresh imaginative patterns of thought, that irresistible thrust of the human spirit into new ways, which make virile literature.

* * *

So here comes in the welter of new novels cascading from the press an unpretentious volume, *The Innocent Voyage,* by a young Englishman, Mr. Richard Hughes, which contains as fresh a perception of life seen through the eyes of children as *Alice in Wonderland* which, perversely, it keeps suggesting. There is so much that is fresh and entertaining in the adventures of these children that one does not try to argue its merits pedantically. To begin with a minor matter, the background of the semi-tropical romantic Caribbean, which has been treated in every possible manner by a host of writers, is here dashed off casually with a gusto and pleasantry absolutely original, as I can well testify, having made long visits to that quarter of the world and always found myself baffled by the density and deadness of tropical luxuriance.

Mr. Hughes is not awed by the mystery and romance of these dark and fearful islands any more than his children: he handles them with a freedom and nonchalant irrespect that is refreshing, exciting and truthful—the hurricane, the jungle, the blacks, the beautiful treacherous sea. He sees them as the children see them, who accept it all as simply as they would Piccadilly or Fifth Avenue, making no effort to comprehend its savage mysteries. They are not dazzled by this tropical world. And there is a new and equally refreshing pirate world! The old stuff has been reworked, again with the aid of the children's perceptions, and yields unexpected riches. To our sophisticated movie-bred minds Mr. Hughes's pirates seem to belong to the *Pinafore* rather than the *Treasure Island* breed, but I daresay they are more authentic than either, the real thing at last because seen

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without preconceptions through the sharp reflections of an unprejudiced mind. Lastly, there are the children themselves, a flock of them, who are Mr. Hughes's chief triumph. Without any help from Messrs. Freud and Jung (thank God!) he has put down a new-version childhood which I am ready to accept at once as a wholly credible version. Being altogether modern, of the last hour of the present day, he is not trammelled by any conventions and unblushingly is free to state just what he knows. Compared with Emily, Carroll's Alice is a nice little sophisticated Victorian, who remembers too well what she has been taught and tries to live up to it. Mr. Hughes neither sentimentalizes nor rationalizes his little creatures. He does not hesitate to show how little they depend upon their begetters or, indeed, upon any element of the dull grown-up world around them, how frankly egocentric and unmindful of the before and after, without the trailing clouds of glory and all the rest of the bunk. To these children with their mob solidarity the pirate ship is neither horrible nor impossible.

* * *

There are more delicate matters which Mr. Hughes boldly essays and gets away with as his tale unfolds—the emergence of adolescence and its influence on the two older girls, and the dark subject of the child's conscience. While not always quite convincing on this last debatable ground, Mr. Hughes refrains from distorting his picture with the pseudo-science of psycho-analysis. He sets down what he sees without trying to make it fit into any psychological mould. In other words, he gives free rein to his divination of which there is more than one brilliant stroke. This, apart from the very good time which his *Innocent Voyage* gives an alert reader (the story teller's first business) pricks him with ideas, fresh ideas about familiar things, such as children, in a bubbling, unquenchable and usually convincing manner. And what a good time he must have had doing it! Perhaps that sense of irresistible joy which the creator has taken in his creation is the best fruit that he has to offer his reader. Mr. Hughes has written other things, mainly plays. No matter what his versatile fancy may turn to next, I shall want to read it because he has that rare, all too rare, quality in this day of high-pressure literary output, a fresh mind. And he comes from London, not from Greenwich Village.

* * *

This precious quality of a fresh mind, which gives forth the unexpected, has already been demonstrated several times by another Englishman, Mr. David Garnett. Immediately on the heels of the Great War he turned his back on the drab realities of the world and produced that singularly haunting tale, *Lady into Fox,* whose simplicity of statement beguiled the reader into accepting as wholly possible a modern transmigration of souls, of a woman into a furry creature of the woods. I know of no other fairy tale which one can so easily swallow whole, and the literary art by which it was performed is a notable gift. It is the essence of matter-of-factness applied to a chosen situation which is supernatural (as we ordinarily perceive nature). Given his postulates which, although bizarre, have a deceiving air of commonplace, due to the simplicity and directness of their presentation, Mr. Garnett dealt with them in *Lady into Fox* and in succeeding books as any humdrum realist (with his power of literary statement) might deal with them. Before he becomes aware of it the reader is gently shunted into the improbable. Deft craftsmanship that! But it is something better than mere tricks with words, a playing with an entertaining fantasy—in which Mr. Garnett rivals Mr. Walter de la Mare for always some idea underlies the fancy (as is not always the case with Mr. de la Mare); what our crude forebears might have called a moral to his fairy story, but what I shall call a structural truth of large human significance, as with the poor lady who finally is resolved completely into a furtive and hunted animal of the fields. Mr. Garnett did not press this

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idea, but no sensitive reader could escape its influence leading him on, pointing to certain dark depths in this complex of human experience; so lightly touched upon, so omnipresent, yet giving importance to the matter-of-factness, to all the obvious detail of the story. Mr. Garnett with this first book achieved a place of distinction on the crowded stage of contemporary fiction writers, beside Mrs. Mary Webb and Mr. Walter de la Mare, to mention two who seem akin. What followed *Lady into Fox* had some of the rare quality of that first book, although none was so good.

Now appears a story which must puzzle the reader familiar with those earlier books. The deft touch of the magician which made *Lady into Fox* elusively significant is entirely wanting in *No Love*. The matter-of-fact manner, the simplicity of statement are there, and something of that power which by slight changes in emphasis and arrangement create a new impression of a commonplace.

No Love is plain realism—realism that hardly achieves veracity to any marked degree. It is the story through a couple of generations of two small family groups, one which conforms and the other which rebels (or at least has radical sympathies) with the emphasis of the story on the second generation which comes to maturity in the war. They are not very interesting people—I hardly dare admit it to myself!—neither the Admiral and his shadowy wife, their neurasthenic offspring who hates his father (with the ridiculous Freudian excuse) nor the more lovable couple in the small stone house, and their healthier-minded lad, nor the sexual experiments of this younger generation, free and insignificant to themselves as they are in the prevailing fashion of portraying such matters. It is as if some one with authority had told Mr. Garnett that, being now a full-fledged novelist, he must give over toying with his fantasies and draw from models. The results are—models, better done by many of his contemporaries and wholly lacking the charm, the suggestiveness of his earlier fantasies. What is worse, Mr. Garnett betrays that he has been to the psycho-analytic school and has painfully pressed his models into the rigid moulds he learned there. The harm that Freud and Jung have done to contemporary literature it would be difficult to state in a single indictment. To all the aborted creations and misguided writers for which they must be held guilty, must there be added the fresh talent of this young English novelist?

* * *

However, Mr. Garnett's miss is better than what some critics seem to consider a triumph of American fiction, Mr. Oliver's *Victim and Victor*, which I find pretentious in effort, theatrical in design if not in effect, sentimental and not a little dull. It is a "case" from the "clinic" of the modern psychiatrist, self-consciously delivered and after all the twists of delivery, learned in the Conrad school, nothing much to bother about. The case is that of a young Episcopalian "priest" who for some unnamed offense or intrigue of a colleague—it doesn't matter which—is defrocked and struggles painfully for reinstatement into his institutional status. The operator, the clinician, is too anxious over his special adroitness as Hawthorne was not—and what he has on his mind fails to establish itself as remarkable or deeply felt. Nor is the incident of the night chase after an escaped patient who wishes to commit suicide so moving as was intended.

Yet *Victim and Victor* is so much the sort of novel that judges award prizes to that I am surprised to see that it failed to gain the Pulitzer award for the most representative American novel of the year—which in a way it might be. Instead this year the judges on that foundation by some happy insight decided to bestow their honor upon one of the few contemporary American novels which possess to a high degree that quality of freshness, of individuality I am writing about. *Scarlet Sister Mary* is not as rich in this quality as Mrs. Peterkin's *Black April*, which came last year. Why, by the way, did not the prize-givers awake to the originality of this

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new talent when it was first so aboundingly displayed? One is thankful, however, that the jury finally has discovered an American novel with truth and originality and, above all, freshness of perception, whether or not in the technical sense it should be called a novel, because it is significant and still more because its significance is devoted to a section of our culture that has hitherto either been ignored or condescended to. That the Pulitzer prize committee forgot this year the prim restrictions of the Founder and awarded their prize to the picture of the unconventional and unmoral Sister May'e is also something to be thankful for. . . .

* * *

To return to England for another triumph in a difficult field, to Mr. Wells's gusty scenario of a cinema spectacle, *The King Who Was a King,* one asks why this remarkable effort did not come out of movieland itself instead of from the versatile hand of an English novelist? Are we not, if not the actual discoverers of the motion picture, its greatest patrons and most prolific exploiters? Is our national life itself not one prolonged ecstatic movie? Yet it is more than doubtful—indeed, Mr. Wells himself perceives as his epilogue reveals—how difficult it will be to get his great contribution to our most characteristic art screened or even presented here. Imagine Mr. Will Hays passing such an unpatriotic onslaught on war! And if by accident it should escape the censor, how would it fare with the National Security League, the American Legion, the Daughters of the Revolution and all our other gorgon-headed agencies for fostering the spirit of war in this land of the brave and the free? It was only the other day that the president of our largest technological school allowed himself to be quoted as saying that every sensible man believed in preparedness. Mr. Wells has employed every device known to the cinema to show what bunk the preparedness theory is. . . . One can easily imagine the methods that would be used to keep *The King Who Was a King* off the screen even if any producer were rash enough to undertake its presentation to American audiences.

It would encounter another serious difficulty in my judgment. Mr. Wells's contribution to the cinema—which presently I shall show to be a very real, a remarkable contribution in itself, apart from its relentless argument—requires from an audience some capacity for thought as well as imagination. It is thought presented in its simplest, most natural forms, by images, many gorgeous pictures superimposed rapidly upon the spectator's consciousness. Yet after all it requires some rudimentary intelligence and reflection to grasp the significance of all these fleeting pictures, to put them together as the author means them to be woven into an irresistible argument against warfare. Not more intelligence and imagination, to be sure, than a twelve-year-old boy or girl normally might be expected to exercise, and the whole is abundantly coated with emotional, even sentimental gravy of approved type. But surely Mr. Wells must know that the motion picture was developed in response to the popular demand for an entertainment which asks *nothing* of the spectator's mind and imagination. After all the years of drugging, which naïve themes and pictures have administered to our audiences, whatever rudimentary faculties of thought they may have had are atrophied and must be revived gently, not in one fiery gulp of this enormous panorama. . . . So I am afraid that *The King Who Was a King* is doomed to remain, at least for the United States, a book play, for the few, rather than become the glorious actuality it might be for the many.

* * *

Further, it is not a "talkie". There is plenty of accompanying sound—music and uproars—but Mr. Wells, as if unaware of the amazing new developments in motion picture technique, has relied upon the screened legend for such explanation or dramatic dialogue as he uses. He has thus set himself, needlessly,

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a most difficult task—that of making intelligible a serious argument solely by pictures with the occasional aid of screened words. He has demonstrated ably what the old silent picture play can be made to do by a skilful and creative mind. Probably every writer has felt, after witnessing one of the incoherent, melodramatic messes served by the mile to cinema audiences, a disgust rendered more acute by his conception of what a picture might be made into if someone endowed with imagination and courageous enough to experiment could try his hand at the thing. For motion pictures, even silent ones, are really adapted to portraying conditions of mind by revealing those multitudinous flitting perceptions which serve for thought with most human beings.

* * *

Mr. O'Neill, latterly, has experimented with the problem of adequately revealing what his characters feel and think but do not say or act. To his own satisfaction and that of many of the critics, he has solved it by resorting to the old aside, an elaborated aside to which he has given the dignity of a separate part, almost of a separate character. His people talk twice, once for publication and once privately, which they give away to the audience. That is a clumsy and unconvincing device; the slight gain of insight is obtained at the sacrifice of credibility, reality. For the inner life of human beings is not conducted dialectically, in spoken sentences, not even in incoherent words. Far better than such a device—better than the old-fashioned unpretentious aside from which it was adapted—is what the camera can do in presenting the observer with the concrete material of experience, of the consciousness that at any given moment is filling the character's mind, both what is acting on him as well as his reaction to it. This adaptability of the machine play because of its rapid shifts of viewpoint, Mr. Wells has availed himself of prodigally and, from the hand of a novice, amazingly. All the incoherent mass of feelings and memories, of inherited prejudices associated with familiar symbols, which make thought, conviction, for the average human mind, he has seized upon and manipulated in a wealth of fleeting images. His theme, audaciously chosen, is one that lends itself well to such mass treatment—the prejudice of mankind in favor of war and the methods by which this prejudice is fertilized and propagated in modern societies.

* * *

For such a tremendous undertaking Mr. Wells has wisely decided not to reject the familiar symbols of the fairy story, although obviously demoded, of king and princess, a Ruritanian kingdom, etc.—all too near the actualities of the Balkan States, and, alas, not so remote today as the pacifist might wish to think. It is old stuff, but, all the same, it serves very well as vehicle for the huge symbols Mr. Wells is employing and will delight an audience that still thinks in childhood's terms. Even the restrained amount of sentimentality between the King and the Princess of Scaevia is a concession to producer and audience well worth making. And the American business men of the piece are quite as fantastic in close Wall Street terms as king and princess and serve their purpose none the worse for that. It makes little difference how archaic and unreal symbols may be provided they can be made to work as Mr. Wells has made them work for the glory of a fresh idea, a new understanding of the sinister forces within and without which even today are thrusting humanity back into the shambles.

"I submit," writes Mr. Wells in conclusion, "I have provided producer and composer with the material for a handsome and possible, if difficult film, and that I have done my part to show that a hard, fairly complex argument can be stated more clearly and more effectively upon the screen than in any other way. In no other way would it be possible to say so plainly that the Peace of the World can only be secured through the establishments of world controls of the common interests of mankind, and that if war is to come to an end there is nothing for it but a frank opposition to and struggle with the patriotic

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symbols and suggestions that sustain the base spirit of nationalism. I believe that all over the world audiences could be interested in such a film as this, and sent home from the show seething with discussion and turned to new and more illuminating points of view."

To all of which I say, Amen! And I hope that timidity and prejudice in this country will not relegate Mr. Wells's gallant effort to expand the field of the motion picture as well as teach a powerful and much needed lesson to the limited audience of a book. Even limited to a book *The King Who Was a King* will have a large and appreciative hearing. And what a good time Mr. Wells must have had in creating this big scenario! In filling in the huge canvas with bold ingenious strokes! A riot for his fertile imagination and something of a relief also after the restrictions, the well-known commonplaces of the novel. In spite of all that he has done over a quarter century to enlarge that old mould and fill it with vital ideas, in the picture he has found a vehicle better suited for his propagandizing purpose, one which permits him to handle freely the future as well as the present, to use his command of detail—and to preach, as he has shown himself always strong and willing to preach, unabashed by petty carpings. To mould, at least to try to mould the human consciousness of his day into new patterns—can there be anything more inspiring for the mature creator to attempt?

All this—the freshness of conception, the ardor and the courage to make of the mechanical picture something better than it has been in the hands of its present exploiters—should have come from an American. What other background in the world should so encourage to spontaneous experimentation with an idea and a medium of expression, as the American background? Yet of the five contemporary books that I have discussed in this article, all but two—only one of which is worth mention—were written by Englishmen, whose long inheritance has not seemingly dulled either imagination or will to play with old matter in new forms.

BOOKS MENTIONED IN "FICTION AND IDEAS"

The Innocent Voyage, *by Richard Hughes.* HARPERS. $2.50.

No Love, *by David Garnett.* KNOPF. $2.50.

Victim and Victor, *by John Rathbone Oliver.* MACMILLAN. $2.50.

Scarlet Sister Mary, *by Mrs. Julia Peterkin.* BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.50.

The King Who Was a King, *by H. G. Wells.* DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50.

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BIOGRAPHY

KARL MARX *by Otto Rühle*
(VIKING. $5.00)

IN the world of literature, as in the world of life, victories are sometimes won by enthusiasm, honesty and hard work over muddle-headedness and poor thinking. This book is a case in point. It is a good book in spite of the usual Marxian absurdities plus a number of new ones; it is a good book because Marx, the man, in all his harshness, pertinacity and courage stands stark and clear before the gloomy social background of the mid-Nineteenth Century; it is a good book because the writer, saturated in the history of socialism, is within narrow limits, a good historian.

The author has done two things well: he has correlated and articulated the work of Marx in nice proportion to the times in which he lived; and he has told us just enough, neither too little nor too much, about Marx's personal career, his family, his friendships and his daily life.

Upon the other hand, the eagerness of Herr Rühle to persuade, to clarify and to comprehend is offset by a dogmatic assertiveness as insistent and domineering as that of Dr. Scott McBride and the Anti-Saloon League; the life of the master is fitted into a nice psycho-analytic box labelled "inferiority complex, a complete specimen"; and Hegelian philosophy, as in other socialistic commentaries on the Bible according to Marx, is made the subject of an unnecessary and abstruse dissertation.

According to the author, "the three characteristic features of Marx's individuality—poor health, Jewish origin and the fact that he was the first-born—interact, and combine to produce an intensified sense of inferiority". This, we are told, is the explanation of Marx. The inferiority complex being a triple one, the man subject to it is the more brilliant. He has to fight, to work, to excel. "The urge to be godlike forms his plans in life and guides all his activities." Marx was, indeed, especially fortunate. He suffered from gastro-intestinal trouble but, we are told, "moral and aesthetic rigorisms spring out of the bowels". From such difficulties are "recruited the army of moralists, the apostles of good behavior, the heroes of virtue, the revealers of a new ethic or ideal mode of life". And among these Marx was preëminent. So much for the bizarre inferences strained from the scientific investigations of Dr. Jung and Dr. Freud. If Marx had only been deaf and bald and astigmatic, he would, apparently, have worked greater wonders.

Hovering over the earlier pages of this book are the Hegelian clouds from which, in accordance with orthodox socialist tradition, the great Marx always emerges triumphant. The hero destroys, as is usual, the mysticism, subjectivity and ideology of his old master and erects in their place *scientific materialism*.

Now, this is exactly what Karl Marx does not do. The eight hundred pages of *Das Kapital* are, in one sense and to their detriment, quite Hegelian. They are based on logical abstractions and formulae rather than on tentative hypotheses drawn from the changing world of biological and psychological investigation. As Max Eastman aptly says: "He struggled against his education but his education triumphed". He turned Hegel upside down but he did not turn him inside out. The relativity of truth was something Marx never thought of. His followers chant incessantly of "ideologies" and of the destruction of the same by their champion; but the formulae of Marx are ideologies of his own

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conceiving. One may worship materialism quite as readily as Jesus of Nazareth. The Marxian scriptures are longer than the Christian Gospels and are more difficult to understand. None the less, an atmosphere of holiness has been attached to them. Herr Rühle is not as much of a fundamentalist in this respect as are some, and for this we are grateful. He is, however, sufficiently orthodox to robe Marx in pontifical garments, and to hint but vaguely at a new orientation of socialism.

But a changed outlook for our own times is socialism's greatest need. Even as Christianity is still enchained by Pauline philosophy, so, too, is socialism held back by Marxian devotions. Marx's theory of value and his theory of panics have little meaning in the world today. Unemployment, old age pensions and the baby's milk offer more pressing problems than the materialistic conception of history. The latter is true in part and false in part, and in the middle of the Nineteenth Century needed emphasis. The acceptance or rejection of this philosophical hypothesis is not of immediate moment. What the world needs is decent comfort for its inhabitants, cleaner homes, shorter hours, higher wages, assured work, peace, and international cooperation to secure it. Yet Herr Rühle continues to reiterate the musty talk of a Marxian formula, "subsequently destined to become the general formula of a class struggle as pursued by all parties, of all socialistic brands, and in all countries". History knows of no such formula operative either in Russia or elsewhere, either in times past or in times present.

This formula idea, which Herr Rühle will not drop, is socialism's biggest handicap. Many thousand sincere and thoughtful people stay outside the socialist fold on its account. If Marx had never lived it is quite possible that socialism would have spread more rapidly than it has. St. Simon and Robert Owen have as good a title as Karl Marx to the term, "socialist". These Utopians may have been vague; but one believes their point of view nearer the truth than that of Marx. However that may be, it is absurd for those who would minimize the individual's rôle in history (in comparison with economic trends and natural law) to worship longer at Karl Marx's shrine or any other man's.

The author of this book concedes that Marx's work is done and that the time has now arrived for a new step forward. None the less, he persists in making Marx the rock of his salvation; and it is for this that we would mainly quarrel with him.

The English translation, *Karl Marx,* contains some peculiar infelicities of diction: "forked out £160", "was on the rocks again", etc. Expressions such as these would puzzle the author as much as they annoy the reader. In general, however, the style of this biography is characterized by color, clarity and vigor, making readable the story of this German exile, philosopher, agitator, economist and prophet of a revolutionary day.

WALTER PHELPS HALL

EMMA WILLARD: DAUGHTER OF DEMOCRACY *by Alma Lutz*

(HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. $4.00)

A THOROUGH and worthy presentation of the life of a thorough and worthy woman. The life of a good woman, and a school teacher into the bargain, is not perhaps the most diverting food for biography. But the book is, nevertheless, important in the history of women's education, for Emma Willard planted a seed that grew: the idea that the minds of women could be developed by education as well as the minds of men. She not only planted that seed. She cultivated it with intelligence and with energy until it grew into a flourishing plant.

In an age when women were taught that it was "unwomanly to hold opinions on serious subjects", and when their education consisted in enough reading to be able to peruse the Scriptures and very little else, Emma

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Hart prepared herself to teach young women such subjects as history, science and higher mathematics. She taught these subjects to young women and taught them with a marked degree of success. Heavy brown paper was, it is true, pasted over the pictures of the human body in the physiology books of the "young ladies" in the Troy Female Seminary; nevertheless, Emma Willard continued to teach physiology in spite of a storm of protest from outraged parents. Mrs. Willard not only taught girls subjects which had been formerly regarded as comprehensible only to boys, but she demonstrated to the community at large the value of her teaching. Public examinations of her pupils were held several times each year, to which she invited eminent professors from higher institutions of learning to question her pupils, thus demonstrating the success of her views.

Mrs. Willard urged on the New York State Legislature in 1818 a "plan for improving female education", stressing the great importance to a democracy of the training of women teachers, who would release men for more arduous work. The legislature failed to put her plan into effect, but the "female seminaries" with which she was connected went on training a small army of women teachers whose practical demonstrations as to their worth were to spread gradually throughout the United States.

The writing of the book is, perhaps, at its best in the early chapters which give a vivid and delightful picture of Colonial life in New England at the time when Emma Hart was a child. The later chapters lose something of this spontaneity. The work reflects, one feels, something of the pompous periods of the many letters which come from Mrs. Willard's own pen. The chapter on Mrs. Willard's travels in Europe shows to perfection the contrast of the stark Puritanism of New England and the more mellow culture of the Old World. "I am not ashamed," wrote Emma Willard in 1830 of the Greek marbles in the Louvre, "to say that I have not visited the statuary . . . I should rather be ashamed to say that I had." Of the Tuileries Gardens: ". . . my dear girls . . . If your mothers were here, I would leave you sitting on these shaded benches and conduct them through the walks, and they would return and bid you depart for your own America, where the eye of modesty is not publicly affronted, and where virgin delicacy can walk abroad without a blush." Of the opera in Paris she writes: "I like to be amused, but not at the expense of virtue." In England we find her shocked at the atheism of Robert Owen and, when asked by that social reformer if she did not consider it right to keep an open mind in matters of religion, answering: "No Sir. I will not reinvestigate the evidences of Christianity—I shall never change my belief."

MARY LEE

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A VARIED SHELF

ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT *by Erich Maria Remarque* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.50)

HERE is a book about the war of such extraordinary purity and force that, reading it, one seems actually never to have read of the war before. Numberless books have been written which present the stark, physical horrors of war in quite as full detail as *All Quiet on the Western Front,* but their effect has been nullified by one's perception of the intent to shock. Many others have given us a more complete, more literary, rendition of war as it strikes full upon the nerves of sensitive and intelligent men. Nothing could be less academic than Herr Remarque's book; but nothing could be more vivid. *All Quiet on the Western Front* makes the first type of work seem, by comparison, a mere schoolboy essay in nastiness, and the second, neurotic and vaguely untrue.

As Homer described the beauty of Helen by its effect on the beholder, so does Remarque describe the horror of war. And no other literary device, however gymnastic, could convince us so perfectly, could force us to participate so completely in that horror. In this book, war and the long strain of the momentary fear of death are things which reduce all life and living to a least common denominator of existence.

> Here, on the borders of death, life follows an amazingly simple course, it is limited to what is most necessary . . . In that lies our primitiveness and our survival . . . Life is simply one continual watch against the menace of death;—it has transformed us into unthinking animals in order to give us the weapon of instinct—it has reinforced us with dullness, so that we do not go to pieces before the horror.

This is the war as seen through the eyes of Paul Baümer, a simple German private, a youth of twenty translated from the schoolroom into the trenches, without any philosophy or any settled views of life, or any convictions one way or another. His tragedy, as well as his comrades', does not lie in having been uprooted, but rather in never having had any roots.

> All the older men are linked up with their previous life. They have wives, children, occupations, and interests; they have a background which is so strong that the war cannot obliterate it. . . We had as yet taken no root.

For the older men the war was merely an interruption. However destructive it might be, when it was over, there were still foundations left upon which to build. For these youths there was nothing else, they were unable to think beyond it, and their lives had been laid waste in a strange and melancholy fashion. Paul is never so conscious of the destiny which had set him apart as when he is home on leave. There he is doubly hurt through the futile friendliness of old associations, through the helpless agony of his mother's love.

> . . . I cannot get on with people. My mother is the only one who asks no questions. Not so my father. He wants me to tell him about the front; he is curious in a way that I find stupid and distressing. . . I realize that he does not know that a man cannot talk of such things. I would do it willingly, but it is too dangerous for me to put these things into words. I am afraid they might then become gigantic and I be no longer able to master them.

The war gave only one good gift to these men, and that was the gift of comradeship—a treacherous gift, to be sure, since, where

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the primary condition of life was its uncertainty even loving was hazardous, and a comrade's death was to each man a little death of himself. Nevertheless, these men found as they crouched together in danger an intimacy which transcended the need of speech.

It might be claimed as a fault that this book is sharply and bitterly concentrated, that the action is single and exclusive and that there is room in it for neither synthesis nor conclusion. But what it sacrifices in scope, it gains a thousandfold in strength and direction. *All Quiet on the Western Front* is, if not a great book, certainly a book nearly perfect of its kind. One can only regret the stupid necessity which resulted in the suppressing or deleting of material which was included in the English edition. (The translation from the German has been made by A. W. Wheen.)

AUTHORSHIP IN THE DAYS OF JOHNSON, 1726–1780 *by A. S. Collins* (DUTTON. $5.00)

THE PROFESSION OF LETTERS, 1780-1832 *by A. S. Collins* (DUTTON. $5.00)

THE limitations of these volumes, from the point of view of the general reader, are well enough explained by the circumstances which Mr. A. S. Collins sets forth in his preface. They are concerned wholly with literature as a profession, pursued as a means of livelihood independent of all others. The profession of letters was built up, never so much by genius, as by the industry and popularity of mediocrity. As a rule, those greatest in the practice of letters have rarely been those who derived their support from it.

To study the history of literature as a profession is to find that Shelley is of less importance than Godwin, and Wordsworth than Campbell, and Blake than Holcroft, and all great men than all little men, in so far as the advancement of their profession goes.

These volumes, then, are a historical study of the plains of literature rather than the peaks. The general reader may be disappointed to find so much space devoted to an involved and technical discussion of the trade warfare over copyrights after the lapse in 1695 of the Licensing Act, and its effect on the sale of Bolingbroke's works, or the suppression of Alexander Donaldson's piracy, and so little space, in proportion, given over to genial anecdotes of Dr. Johnson's ponderous improvidence or Pope's waspish shrewdness. Only when, as in the case of Scott, a man of some stature involved himself, by reason of temporary pressure, in the financial scramble, do these works touch upon material likely to be of common interest.

Yet, notwithstanding their specialized character, the picture of the world of letters from 1726 to 1832, presented here, is an extraordinarily interesting one, populated with a host of forgotten figures and seething with innumerable literary controversies long since dead and, for the most part, forgotten. The distant literary landscape which seems, in ordinary retrospect, to be sparsely peopled by giants, looms under Mr. Collins's careful research as a turbulent welter of men and events not very sharply distinguished, in quality or confusion, from the contemporary scene. This is the more true because Mr. Collins has brought, to a sober and scholarly investigation, a very considerable verbal felicity and a slight flavor of dramatic imagination.

In the first of these volumes Mr. Collins traces the decline of patronage as a dependable literary resource, the effect on the author's attitude toward himself and his profession of more reliable copyright legislation and the consequent increase in his bargaining power. With the disappearance of the individual (usually noble) patron, literature passed very largely into the hands of the middle classes, and increasing numbers of men and women, only indifferently qualified by taste and training for the pursuit of

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letters, were drawn into literature as a profession. The man who wrote for money had neither time nor opportunity for careful and loving specialization and, as he wrote to order and upon varied themes, he wrote in a style which was popular and not scholarly. Thus the ranks of readers and booksellers were recruited, as well as the ranks of writers.

By 1780, the point at which Mr. Collins undertakes his second volume, certainly by 1800, the most important changes had been completed and the liveliest part of his research is finished. Literary progress thereafter was a foregone conclusion, as was the professional status of the author. The monthly reviews had been displaced by penny magazines, philosophical and classical works by libraries of useful knowledge, displayed in every bookstall. Thousands of readers and the livings of hundreds of writers were assured, and literature had begun to assume the proportions of a major industry. As a thorough scholar, Mr. Collins hesitates to draw a conclusion.

MARGARET WALLACE

TRAVELS IN THE CONGO *by André Gide* (KNOPF. $5.00)

Travels in the Congo is chiefly interesting for its revelations of some of the preoccupations of one of the finest of contemporary novelists, a novelist who, in a time of great temptation, has not forgotten that prose fiction must ultimately stand or fall on its projection of character, of personality. The book is extremely difficult to read at a stretch, being the random diurnal jottings of the impressions gathered on an African journey that must have so tired the author as to leave him with little desire to write ingratiatingly. Yet, it is worth the effort to a student of Gide. In spite of weariness, hookworm, heat, fever and monotony, the curiosity of the man never ceases to function. He is constantly speculating on the nature of man, for the most part savage man, since the voyage up the Congo and the return from Lake Chad brought contact with few whites. Gide is here revealed, as elsewhere, as a moralist who lacks a stereotyped code; he is continually ruminating on "values" and, though he finds it difficult to do much condemning, he is forever protesting in a fairly dispassionate tone that kindness to the equatorial native would pay in the cash-value sense, as well as in other senses. The book contrasts very strongly with the work of another Frenchman on the Negro, Paul Morand's *Black Magic,* and it is Gide who carries off all the honors. Where Morand is shallow, flashy and bent on gaining the effect of speed in his writing, Gide is thoughtful. He is neither concerned with the black race as material for what Claude McKay calls "society" fiction about the Negro, nor is he, like Wyndham Lewis, wildly apprehensive about the possible capitulation of western standards of order and differentiation before an onslaught of primitive emotionalism from the jungle. The black man, as he is projected from *Travels in the Congo,* seems a pitiable figure, incapable of doing any more than slightly coloring the stream of western thought. Gide sees no bogie.

Perhaps an index to Gide's esthetic credo is to be found in the frequent references to purity of line and purity of light (or their lack) in the African landscape and day. Nearing Lake Chad, Gide expresses rapture that he is getting away from "recent formlessness". Later, he says: "This notion of differentiation, which I have acquired here, and from which proceeds the sense both of the exquisite and of the rare, is so important that it seems to me the principal thing. I shall bring away from this country". He says this some pages and days after he has admitted to having been a Bergsonian "without knowing it". Evidently the truth, for Gide, lies somewhere between the positions of Bergson and Julien Benda.

Dorothy Bussy's translation preserves the quality of Gide's writing, which is admirable because it is clear and linear, even where it

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is most hurried. Although there is none of the overtone or undertone of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* to the memory of whose author Gide dedicates his book, one finishes *Travels in the Congo* with the sense of having experienced an adventure through Belgian and French equatorial Africa.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD *by A. S. Eddington* (MACMILLAN. $3.75)

Most books about the "new physics" have failed for the man-in-the-street or even the man-in-the-study (who is not a physicist) from two mighty defects. First, obscurity of presentation; second, pseudo-finality in philosophical conclusion. Most discussions of the atom have suffered as popular treatises from the former defect; most of the tabloid Einstein literature from the latter. To write a popular book on the revolution in microscopy and astronomy and not to touch on their implications for the beliefs and practices of mankind is perhaps an unnecessary intellectual abstinence. But to write down philosophical conclusions as mathematical deductions is worse. It seems to the reviewer that Professor Eddington in these Gifford lectures, now published in book form in America and England, has deftly avoided both extremes. The book will become, I daresay, the most widely influential, as it is certainly the clearest and most readable, on the subject.

For a dozen chapters the author reviews in a running style, replete with examples—a good part straight from *Alice in Wonderland*—the chief discoveries in astronomy and atomic physics of the past thirty years which have radically altered our conceptions of the material universe. There is the famous Fitzgerald contraction, which teaches us that our reliable friend, the yardstick, may be only eighteen inches long under certain conditions of space and time. There is Einstein's law of gravitation, scrapping Newton's neat and sensible ones, and thrusting in "curved space" instead. Professor Eddington is careful to point out that this is not scientific metaphysics but a practical rule that predicts eclipses and other highly observable phenomena. We learn in one chapter that time, as conceived by the physics we learned at grade-school, is a relative affair applicable to our planet only; and that space, which we had always imagined to be endless, is actually "finite though unbounded". If you travelled through the ether for a few billion light years in a straight line, you would come back to the same point! It is all very confusing and upsetting, but somehow Professor Eddington, by his skill—and especially by his mixture of modesty and daring—makes us believe and even, at times, vividly imagine his new universe.

One illustration from the chapter entitled "Reality" will give a hint of his temper and his method. He is stressing the essentially abstract and metrical nature of the world of physics. As a matter of fact, his statements if duly grasped, are sufficient to dismantle the "materialism" which was too often a correlative of "orthodox physics". In all their implications they become a fundamental transformation of thought ways for both the engineer and the philosopher. He starts off by giving the physicist's statement of the behavior of certain electrons. Then he sums up: "Something unknown is doing we don't know what—that is what our theory amounts to". Then, "I have read something like it elsewhere—

> . . . the slithy toves
> Did gyre and gimble in the wabe".

There is the same suggestion of activity. There is the same indefiniteness as to the nature of the activity and of what it is that is acting. And yet from so uncompromising a beginning we really do get somewhere. . . . To contemplate electrons circulating in the atom carries us no further; but by contemplating eight circulating electrons in one

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atom and seven circulating electrons in another we begin to realize the difference between oxygen and nitrogen. Eight slithy toves gyre and gimble in the oxygen wabe; seven in nitrogen. . . . Out of the numbers proceeds that harmony of natural law which it is the aim of science to disclose. We can grasp the tune, but not the player. Trinarlo might have been referring to modern physics in the words, "This is the tune of our catch, played by the picture of Nobody".

CHARLES R. WALKER

FRONTIERS OF HOPE *by Horace Kallen* (LIVERIGHT. $3.00)

PSYCHOLOGIST, philosopher, historian—yes, and at times a poet—Horace Kallen in this volume examines and appraises the pathfinders on the living European frontiers of his own people. The author of *Zionism and World Politics,* he is preoccupied here with that "organized, secular Jewish nationalism" which is to be found in the new homeland, Palestine; but he looks long at the Jew in Poland, too, and in Russia.

Yet this is not solely a sociological and economic treatise. It is a "travel book" of special distinction, touched at moments with sarcasm and wit, at times with lyric beauty. The picture of Palestine and Televiv, merely as a sensitive tourist's picture, is well worth anybody's while. But Dr. Kallen sees far more than any mere tourist could: he sees the other-worldly aspect which has made the Palestinian enterprise a conflict between realities and Zionist dreams. About these Jews there are a faith and enthusiasm which "transform what would be otherwise a common enough episode in the economies of giving and getting into a consecrated adventure, an act of religion, in which the Jews not alone of Palestine, but of the whole world, have a share". From the first an ardent Zionist, Dr. Kallen's eyes nevertheless are clear as he views the results of the experiment. His people in what was to have been a restored homeland "have the rights of nationality, and no power except to cry out that their rights are being violated. They have the institutional structure of nationality and no land to build it up on". Upon the prosperous Jewry of the United States must fall the main onus of validating "the integrity of Israel".

Moving on to Poland, Dr. Kallen finds more tragedy than humor in the status of the Jew. The rights of minorities are fully guaranteed in the covenant of the League of Nations, and are blandly or truculently ignored, not only in Poland, but throughout eastern and southeastern Europe. Between Pilsudski and Mussolini Dr. Kallen finds a sinister resemblance. He analyzes the two dictators with penetrating and searing accuracy. Poland has been thrown back into the hands of the aristocrat, and the masses are the underdogs. If hardship be the lot of the poorer Poles, a sort of sustained agony is the fate of the Jews. They are "robots, asking for bread and receiving a prayer; and when have men, even Jews, continued to live by prayer alone?"

To the Russian scene Dr. Kallen devotes much greater space; and the tourist-interpreter and philosopher sees everything, apparently, from the spotted tunic of the dining-car waiter to the injustice by which, under the Soviet régime, some live in squalor in Moscow, while others roll in luxury. No one, perhaps, has written so vividly of that city. Thence Dr. Kallen' journeys across the Ukrainian steppes to Kherson and the Jewish colonies, an area of almost virgin value for American writers. What shall become of these Jews? Trained traders, they must adjust themselves to the Soviet philosophy, Dr. Kallen concludes, by learning to be workers.

Now has the philosopher turned prophet, a witty, balanced and practical prophet. Thus we have here more than a picture of the Jew trying to adapt himself to the new social scene in Europe. We have a record written with clarity, eloquence and beauty.

SILAS BENT

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FICTION

WOLF SOLENT *by John Cowper Powys* (SIMON & SCHUSTER. 2 vols. $5.00)

SEVERAL things will make the cautious reader of *Wolf Solent* uneasy while forming his judgment upon it. Probably he has heard the author lecture and will associate a tendency to theatricality in certain pages of the novel with a rapt vehemence of manner on the part of the platform speaker. Later reflection, however, will persuade him that Mr. Powys has sharply checked his writing before it could break into melodrama. Passion there is, to be sure, but it arises from the ecstasy of a poet who adores the earth with a Meredith-like fervor and from the madness of the seer who turns his eyes from a pitiful mankind to a destiny that overpowers it—a passion controlled, nevertheless, by a fine intelligence that permits nothing in excess. There are many passages of lyricism that would be grotesque in a novel of narrower scope, but the lofty theme and high seriousness of *Wolf Solent* are sufficient apologies for them.

It may be complained, moreover, that *Wolf Solent* is loud with echoes, and it is obvious that Mr. Powys has read widely. But if he has read widely he has also read well and has assimilated his lessons with great aptitude. More than once he has confessed his admiration for Proust and Dorothy Richardson and Joyce, and his own methods of exposing Solent's consciousness immediately call these names to mind. He has also aimed to capture some of the terror of *Wuthering Heights* and of Dostoievski's abysmal studies; he has, as in an earlier novel, *Rodmoor,* paid tribute to Hardy's insistence upon the power of locality; he has imitated Dreiser in creating a desirable woman dangled for a time out of the hero's reach. But *Wolf Solent,* like any well-born child, can make its way in the world independent of ancestry; in its own right it can claim respect and attention.

Other readers will balk at the symbolism, for, as in *Wood and Stone,* Mr. Powys has led his plot up the high shore of allegory, where plots are likely to expire in a rarefied atmosphere. But Mr. Powys has been instructed by prior failure, and *Wolf Solent* contains an excellent story and a protagonist who is more than a symbol. The book has been called a prose *Hamlet.* Such comparisons are not wholly meaningless, but the likeness would seem rather to be to *Faust,* for whereas Hamlet is representative of only a special neurotic type, Solent is the projection of humanity itself. Through the two volumes in which the significant experiences of his life are narrated he staggers blindly, sometimes frantically between the lure of a malignant evil and the attraction of a helpful but austere good; he is buffeted by the converging potencies of breed and place; he wavers between ideal and profane love; he tortures himself into the final renunciation. Because he is even as you and I, he becomes the incarnation of a despairing, tragic, and nobly-enduring but futile race. Yet he is unmistakably of our mortality. Mr. Powys, peering within his creature's skull, has reported aspirations and fears, dark obsessions and hatreds with such fidelity, has traced so delicately the shadows on the brain, that we come to know Wolf as intimately as we ever know anyone. By virtue of such a triumphant characterization, he has made his novel one of the most beautiful and powerful written in our language in this century and has made a name that will live in something more substantial than water.

GRANT C. KNIGHT

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CRISIS *by Claude Houghton* (HARPERS. $2.50)

JOHN RAYMOND, to whom life has been a succession of days filled by a series of pleasantly exciting incidents, is suddenly forced to see it against a background of death, when his doctor gives him but one year to live. Possessed of a wife he loves, a possible heir and ample money, he rejects despair and decides to find for himself the answer to the riddle of existence. He thinks that a study of other lives will help him understand his own fate and face it without fear. His mad people-in-law, waifs off the London streets, members of professions socially elect and otherwise, are, all unknown to themselves, pressed into his service. Before the year is up his doctor dies, and the diagnosis is proved wrong. John Raymond will live just as long as another. Meantime, however, he has grown morally from a mere pygmy to a giant who looks down on life as one might look on earth from an aeroplane. "Are not," he asks himself, "pain, loss, suffering, death but shadows, and is not growth the ultimate reality?" He resumes life with a new attitude of kindly tolerance toward others and philosophic detachment for himself. The machinery of the plot creaks, and all too often the author indulges in such phrases as "the desire of the moth for the star". Too often, also, he drops into explanatory parentheses that irritate the ear avid of rhythmic sentences and the mind that detects easily a hawk from a handsaw when "the wind's in the right direction". But despite these faults Mr. Houghton has written a pleasantly original tale that may possibly be useful to those who look to fiction for their daily philosophy.

THUMBCAP WEIR *by Frances Gillmore* (MINTON, BALCH. $2.50)

THIS is excellent photography of a seascape that is very little known to the general world. The scene is the Bay of Fundy and the islands of the Passamaquoddy, and against it are placed the original Scotch settlers, with whom, apparently, it is impossible for other immigrants to meld. The pictures are vivid enough—of seining the weir and gathering in the harvest of silver herring; of cooking, child-bearing and church-going; of a storm that drowns two members of the McQuarrie family; of a fog that almost drives men mad. But the plot is thin and the people move through it with such a consistently villainous or virtuous air as one expects only in the movies or of marionettes. When Miss Gillmore learns to shade her characters a bit more delicately, her readers will get more pleasure from the freshness of her scene and the vigor of her descriptive faculty.

NORAH MEADE

THE MOUNTAIN TAVERN AND OTHER STORIES *by Liam O'Flaherty* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

ONE of the best stories in *The Mountain Tavern* is "Mackerel for Sale". In it the white sunlight, the bay and the fishing village appear swiftly and just sufficiently; then the loafers, the socialist, the shopkeeper, the wretched little fisherman and, after a slight disturbance, the white water of the bay again. In a bright scene, in a few hours, a tiny revolution occurs, without causing even a flicker in the sunlight. And of the story it is very nearly true that in the whole composition there is, as Poe demanded,

> . . . no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished. . . .

Throughout O'Flaherty's two books of stories, *Spring Sowing* and *The Mountain Tavern,* the characteristic "idea of the tale" seems to be his particular understanding of

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the grim, the ironic or the horrible. Occasionally the detail is, for an instant, light and pleasant; as in the description of a mild summer afternoon: "Yea, even the horned snails lay stretched out on gray stones with their houses on their backs". Again and again, however, the scene is harsh, the characters brutal, the event ruin or death. As fully realized experiences, the stories would be stories of horror, so many expressions of despair. But O'Flaherty's representation is deliberately one of a clearly seen effect—like the effect of the appearance of a bayonetted soldier in a picture. The reader does not come near the death; he merely sees a representation of the sight of it. In a word, the characteristic idea is represented cold.

NELLIE BLOOM *by Margery Latimer* (SEARS. $2.00)

THOUGH these stories are not merely impressions or decorations, the writing in them might well give a craftsman or a dilettante a great deal of pleasure. They contain charming recollections like the one of "my little Persian cat who plays the piano sometimes before he retires". The complicated narrative of the title story "Nellie Bloom" holds the emotional effect suspended and intensifying until the last line, until the fall of the last phrase. The story, "Penance", opens with a remarkable piece of imagination:

> The river was ice, frozen in ripples and crests, touched with amber. Beyond rose the hill, blue at night, crusted with snow, and on its incredible arch, the house. Close to the snow, close to the brick walls, the arched windows, grew red berries hanging like drops of blood from the black twigs, burning like a sullen fire around and around the house. And inside was a woman in a blood red gown, her face and hands too white, under her eyes shadows like the half-moon, her hair smooth and black as a bat's wing. She walked to the window and closed her eyes until the ice spread out as far as she could see, vast and permanent, and as she stood there she heard the wind come past the island, past the length of timber, over the snow in a sharp high sweep.

Many of the stories have a peculiar intensity and force. Their peculiarity can hardly be explained by the fineness of the technique, or by the misfortunes of the characters, or even by the individuality of the writer's imagination. Many of the stories, while being stories, also give form to something else; I should say something more. "Original Sin", for example, does not merely depict a girl who expects too much and her lover, who certainly is not too much; it delineates the problem of a sensitive person's attempt to find a happier and more reasonable way of life.

With this general problem the writer is primarily concerned. She is not a teller of tales, or a tolerant scribbling spectator, or a deviser of learned cryptograms. In short, she is not one of the lost generation—at least not yet. She is still expectant, still looks for what is better, and resolutely examines the material that is now at hand. In the color and movement of "Original Sin" there exists a problem of manners and, if one will remember the old and honorable Roman sense of *mores,* morals. Two people have done certain things, practically destroyed themselves, lost their souls. What should these people have done? What shall they do now? These questions the writer really cares about, illuminates, revolves, tries to answer.

Her best stories have incidentally, like medieval manuscripts, color and blackness and proportions that strangers may admire.

JOHN KEMMERER

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE, LIFE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF AMERICA

Your reporter is beginning to fancy himself in the rôle of prophet. *Dodsworth* leaped into the lists this month, precisely as predicted. Also, as forecast, librarians lost themselves in the effort to determine whether *The Cradle of the Deep* were fiction or not. About a third of them report Miss Lowell's work as pure imagination, the rest classify it where the publishers insist it belongs; bunching the two sets of reports and giving the author the benefit of the doubt, it finds itself in third place in the general list. It is noticeable that the library circulation of new books is crowding more closely, in point of time, upon the bookstore circulation. The book clubs have something to do with that. Librarians get inside information (in some cases, advance reports of what the book clubs are going to recommend) and place their book orders accordingly, if they happen to have any money to spend for new books, which so many haven't. The other day on a train for Philadelphia, we met a librarian who was going there to buy books. He figured it out that on the order he was going to place he would save eleven dollars over his railroad fare from New England by making the trip. But there wasn't a single new book on his list. He was going to replenish his supply of the classics, the library's backbone. —F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	THE BISHOP MURDER CASE	*S. S. Van Dine*	SCRIBNER'S
2.	DODSWORTH *	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT, BRACE
3.	PEDER VICTORIOUS	*O. E. Rölvaag*	HARPERS
4.	MAMBA'S DAUGHTERS	*Du Bose Heyward*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
5.	DARK HESTER *	*Anne Sedgwick*	HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN
6.	THE CASE OF SERGEANT GRISCHA	*Arnold Zweig*	VIKING
7.	OLD PYBUS	*Warwick Deeping*	KNOPF
8.	THIS STRANGE ADVENTURE *	*Mary Roberts Rinehart*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
9.	JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN	*H. W. Freeman*	H. HOLT
10.	SILVER SLIPPERS	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
11.	STORM HOUSE *	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
12.	SWAN SONG	*John Galsworthy*	SCRIBNER'S

GENERAL

1.	ELIZABETH AND ESSEX	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT, BRACE
2.	THE ART OF THINKING	*Ernest Dimnet*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
3.	THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP *	*Joan Lowell*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
4.	STRANGE INTERLUDE	*Eugene O'Neill*	LIVERIGHT
5.	WHITHER MANKIND?	*Charles A. Beard*	LONGMANS, GREEN
6.	RASPUTIN	*René Fülöp-Miller*	VIKING
7.	JOHN BROWN'S BODY	*Stephen Vincent Benét*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
8.	THE MAGIC ISLAND	*William B. Seabrook*	HARCOURT, BRACE
9.	MOTHER INDIA	*Katherine Mayo*	HARCOURT, BRACE
10.	THE HOWS AND WHYS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR *	*George A. Dorsey*	HARPERS
11.	THE ROYAL ROAD TO ROMANCE	*Richard Halliburton*	BOBBS-MERRILL
12.	MY LIFE	*Isadora Duncan*	LIVERIGHT

* *This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.*

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BON VOYAGE

The Pleasant Land of France

BY ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE

"'They order,' said I, 'this matter better in France.'" With Cæsar's "All Gaul is divided in three parts", and Voltaire's summing up of Holland as *"Canaux, canards, canaille"*, that is one of the great lines of the travel books of the world. It begins a travel book that has endured for one hundred and sixty-one years, Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*, now appearing in another new edition (Oxford. $.80) with an introduction by Virginia Woolf.

In the general reading, preliminary or reminiscent, that adds so much to travel either actual or vicarious, it is well worth while to turn occasionally to the books descriptive of travelling conditions in other days. They make the road of the present seem easier, the grade less arduous. The Roman legions, training for the march, weighted their boots with lead. The old travel books serve a similar end. Two years ago the writer, with a friend of many years who is somewhat lacking in the Mark Tapleyan philosophy, made a journey of forty days from Marseilles to Providence, Rhode Island, with stops at Alexandria, Beirut, Hjaffa, Constansa, Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens and Lisbon. Neither ship nor fellow voyagers were entirely satisfactory, and the friend grumbled exceedingly.

He saw a light later when confronted with a book called *Touring in 1600*, picturing the inconveniences, hardships and perils associated with only a leg of that voyage three hundred years ago. The mere crossing of the English Channel was high adventure. In 1610 two ambassadors waited at Calais fourteen days before they could make a start, and making a start by no means implied arriving. It was of course better in Sterne's day, yet, according to *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century*, in 1772, four years after Sterne made his journey, one traveller waited at Calais for nine days for weather that would permit him to make the crossing. But reread *A Sentimental Journey*, and then reread Thackeray's sketch, "Dessein's", in *The Roundabout Papers;* and then, forgetting the petty irritations, thank the stars for the Aladdin's Lamp that has made modern travel what it is.

Place aux dames! Here, obviously for their particular benefit, is *A Shopping Guide to Paris* (McBride. $3.00), by Thérèse and Louise Bonney. Apart from the practical information, the book presents in epitome a phase of modern history. The great names associated with industry read like a roll of the Marshals of France. In thinking of the Second Empire we can no more forget the name of Worth than we can forget the names of the Duc de Morny, or Thiers, or Victor Hugo. For nearly a century the "Wedding Gown by Worth" has figured in the reporting of royal marriages. It was Worth who created the "uniform" which the Pope imposed on his world in his unofficial dictum on clothes, a uniform which is essential to court life in many countries and which is worn by the Queen of Spain.

A quotation from the Foreword sums up the scope and purpose of the book: "Now we are writing to tell you *where* to buy, knowing from our experience that buying is of as much importance as sight-seeing in this enchanting city. It is our belief that you will derive as much pleasure from the 'perfect gown', a really authentic Louis XIV chair, the unique setting of an aquamarine, the glowing beauty of a Gobelin, even the simple per-

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gratuitous travel brochures

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¶ To the advertisers of transportation and travel service, then, books must be considered an important, though gratuitous, factor in their publicity campaigns—and their readers must consequently form an already receptive market.

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¶ And the potentialities of this market are even greater when it is considered that nearly two-thirds of THE BOOKMAN readers are in cities of a half million and more; that three-fifths of its subscribers are women; that nearly half of its circulation is among the higher income groups . . . and that THE BOOKMAN is now to appear on all the important Transatlantic steamers.

reach this receptive market—capitalize on this publicity—economically—through THE BOOKMAN

fection of a handkerchief, as from the façade of some historic monument. As much pleasure and all the more chagrin, if you make mistakes! . . . You are safe enough in admiring Notre Dame. Since it isn't for sale, you are beyond temptation." Incidentally, the reader is likely to find both informative and important the chapter, "Two Hours for Lunch", a survey of gastronomical Paris, and the chapter, "Call the Doctor".

In sharp contrast is Herbert B. Turner's *Picturesque Old France* (Little, Brown. $4.00). Here Paris is merely an incident, and the shop windows of the Rue de la Paix as unsubstantial as Barmecide's feast. It is another France that Mr. Turner seeks, finds, and loves; a land of quaint villages, of medieval towns redolent of the old names such as Touraine, Bretagne, Normandie, Poitou, Nivernais, Bourgogne, Languedoc. His itinerary covered every corner of France save the extreme northern provinces and that bit of the southwest that is known as the Côte d'Argent, and romance began at the gateway, with the landing at Havre.

There is a touch of the familiar, pardonable Pharisaism of the old traveller in his description of a fellow voyager of the transatlantic journey, a woman moving with the supposedly typical American rush. The two were dining at Tortoni's Hotel in Place Gambetta in Havre, where the food was found good and the 1921 "Corton" superb.

"'Wonderful stuff, this,' she said, 'but these foreigners take too long to eat and don't know the value of a cafeteria. Well, anyway, it's good to have a whole bottle of wine to yourself even if they do take a whole day to root it out of the cellar. Say, what do you think? I've got twelve days to spend over here and I want to 'do' as much as I can. My plan is to go to Paris, Rotterdam, and all the other *dams,* then to Lake Lugano, Como, and all the other *O's.* Can you tell me an easy way to get to all those places?'"

Despite the leisurely flavor of the book it is

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GOING ABROAD?

BE SURE TO TAKE

WHERE PARIS DINES

by JULIAN STREET

A GASTRONOMICAL guide to the Mecca of *Gourmets,* prepared with loving care by a connoisseur of good foods and wines. Whatever your mood, as you browse about the streets of Paris—whether you are on the Buttes-Chaumont or the Champs-Elysées, Montmartre or the "Boul' Miche"—it will tell you just the right place to dine. There is a list of over two hundred restaurants, from the world-famous ones to quaint little out-of-the-way places where Mr. Street has discovered some fine *spécialité de la maison.* It is in the form of a running comment of anecdote and informal advice on such important subjects as the kind of dish to have in each place, the right way to order, and how to make the *garçon* your willing slave. The authoritative section devoted to French wines tells not only what the best wines and vintages are, but how to know them and when to drink them. *With many illustrations.* $2.50

DOUBLEDAY DORAN & COMPANY, INC.

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rich in nuggets of practical advice. There is no travelling with knapsack or donkey. Mr. Turner prefers the motor car, and offers suggestions as to its cost and the best methods of hiring it. He found that for a small car, six cents a kilometer, the driver supplying oil and gasolene, was ample; for a comfortable modern touring car, eight cents, provided he guaranteed one hundred kilometers a day, whether a run of that distance was made or not. In addition he made the chauffeur an allowance of two dollars a day for his personal expenses, including the garage, and on dismissing him, gave him about a ten percent tip if his conduct had been satisfactory. Thus a 2200 kilometer tour of fourteen days cost hardly $225, including the chauffeur's keep and tip.

At the extreme southerly point of that circular tour Mr. Turner, in spirit at least, encounters E. I. Robson on a similar romantic journey that is described in *A Wayfarer in the Pyrenees* (Houghton Mifflin. $3.00); and for a moment American and Englishman survey the world together from the old Hotel de la Cité, high up on the embattled walls of Carcassonne. Like the writer at the beginning of this paper, Mr. Robson approaches his subject from the point of view of the traveller of yesterday, recalling the Pyrenean impressions and experiences of Taine, Gustave Doré, and Pierre Loti. With a wealth of descriptive and historical matter, *A Wayfarer in the Pyrènees* is also decidedly practical. For example, there is the question of the season. The English season opens about mid-April in some parts and in May in others. The French season begins later. The great "Route of the Pyrenees" service begins about the third week in June.

Mr. Robson's own preference is for the months before the season begins, when one can enjoy the magnificence of the big hotels at a reasonable rate, or, at the smaller hotels, dine excellently, and, as a rule, sleep comfortably at an exceedingly moderate cost. In the Pyrenees and on the way there, besides mountain peaks and scenery and historical associations, there are gastronomical experiences to be sought. Perigord, for instance, is the home of truffles, *foie gras,* and of lard; as one witty traveller has expressed it, *sans beurre et sans reproche;* the Bordelais are experts in other ways; the Dordogne is the center of the lamprey; the Garonne and Ariège of *confits de canard;* and the list of specialties to be found Narbonne and Perpignan way will make the most inexpert mouth water. Also there are wonderful wines, and if this be treason make the most of it.

The writer shares responsibility for that allusion to the Patrick Henry speech. But Mr. Robson must assume full guilt for his companion volume, *A Wayfarer in French Vineyards* (Houghton Mifflin. $3.00), a most reprehensible book, written, as it is, in the lawless spirit of those who poetically refer to the alcoholic beverage known as champagne as "the imprisoned laughter of the peasant girls of France". Mr. Robson writes not only of wine making, but also of wine drinking. Indirectly at least he questions the wisdom of a certain "experiment". Off with his head, and let "education" deal with his book, suppressing it, or at least wisely amending it, as "education" has amended, for radio reading on Christmas Eve, Dickens's *Christmas Carol,* obliterating the noxious reference to "Bishop's punch", and substituting "tea".

Obviously *A Wayfarer in French Vineyards* is a "bootleg" book, to be read by "scofflaws" and "patrinots" by candlelight in a cellar corner. True, by judicious suppression of the context, the book might be made to serve as useful "propaganda". For example, here in cold print are such bits as "the cock-

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tail habit is a most wicked one"; "no cigarettes"; "no strong flavored liqueurs". And there are statistics for those who are urging "no compromise" in the matter of the French debt. "Despite a dry America, nearly thirty-five million bottles of champagne were exported between January and November, 1926. . . . Yquem was able to sell at seventy-five thousand francs the *tonneau;* and great Médoc at forty thousand; Burgundy at ten thousand a *pièce;* the Hospice sale at Beaune reached a record total of a million three hundred thousand odd francs".

A decidedly practical feature of Roy Elston's *Off the Beaten Path in Southern France* (McBride. $2.50), is the thirty-five page appendix dealing with itineraries and costs. The book is designed for the light purse, and Mr. Elston is inclined to be an optimist in estimating expenses. For example, he plans one trip of twenty-one days from London to London, with nineteen days spent in the Nîmes-Arles-Avignon section, for an approximate cost of $100. While he is intentionally vague in writing of hotel prices, preferring to refer the traveller to the Michelin Guide for the current year in order to assure accuracy, he suggests that the equivalent of one dollar a night is "the most you would be expected to pay", and that the total hotel cost, meals and wine included, would average about $2.50 a day. These figures seem rose colored, but remember that the aim of the book is to tell of towns "off the beaten track", and that the hostelry to be found in Cahors, or St.-Gilles is very different both in luxury and prices from the great hotels that line the Champs Elysées in Paris, or face the Promenade des Anglais at Nice. For those planning to travel by motor car Mr. Elston maps out a route covering approximately 2800 miles, to be covered in about thirty days, and explains the formalities involved in taking a car to France.

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS—(*continued*)

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DRAMATIC ART *by Donald Clive Stuart* (APPLETON. $3.50)

DONALD CLIVE STUART, who is professor of dramatic art at Princeton University, has come to the conclusion that one of the functions of our own era, and perhaps the chief function in so far as the theatre is concerned, has been to set the drama free. Accordingly, he appears to believe that few, if any, individual plays of today will draw from our grandchildren more than a tolerant smile, the emphasis today being on a search for new forms in anticipation of traditions to come. Professor Stuart's interest is largely in the past, where there are more certainty and more satisfaction in the matter of definitions and where the origins of dramatic forms can be studied without danger of the specimen wriggling under the microscope. Professor Stuart's research has been extensive. His categories of plays and authors begin with the forerunners of Æschylus, being arranged with regard to the relative importance of action or character, tragedy or comedy of theme. They are large, and painstakingly fortified.

PLAYS, PLAYERS, PLAYHOUSES *by Irma Kraft* (DOBSEVAGE. $2.50)

IRMA KRAFT's volume is an animated discussion of tendencies, accomplishments and personalities in the theatre, not only in the United States and Europe but in China, Japan and Egypt; and not only on Broadway but in Greenwich Village, where the New Playwrights and Provincetown Theatre groups receive sympathetic attention. No limit, beyond the outposts of civilization on our earth, is placed on the ground she covers, as a result of her travels and work in various cities. In one brief chapter she dwells on the *Nō* drama of Japan and in the next on the periods through which the Russian drama passed before reaching the period of Maierhold. The volume abounds in citations of plays, persons and theatres and is generously illustrated. The universality of her interest is shown by the space given to the application of the theories of Richard Boleslavsky to the training of actors at the American Laboratory Theatre as well as by the large assortment of contrasting details which she has managed, with journalistic facility, to include.

Essays and Criticism

MUSICAL MEANDERINGS by *W. J. Turner* (DUTTON. $2.50)

THE AUTHOR of this compilation of exceedingly brief essays shows vivacity, musical sophistication and genuine independence of judgment. These latter qualities make him extraordinarily readable. How refreshing it is, for example, to find the author dwelling on the fact that due to Brahms's lack of intellect all of his large-scale works lack complete unity of design; on the same composer's addiction to rococo embellishment and on the cloying and school-girlish sentimentality which underlies his reputation for abstruse austerity; on Bach's lack of musical sensitivity and frequent deficiency as a *formalist;* on the allegation that Berlioz surpasses Bach "as Shakespeare surpasses Pope", and on other similar heresies: yet in each case understanding what he is about, paying each composer his just due and adducing reasonable evidence for his judgments. Occasionally the musical reader will balk—as when, for example, the author goes so far as to eulogize Mozart's irrefutably nonsensical librettist, Da Ponte. There is a pleasant diversity of subject matter, varying exceedingly and somewhat curiously in significance.

MUSICAL DISCOURSE *by Richard Aldrich* (OXFORD. $3.00)

THESE essays, reprinted in part from the New York *Times,* for which most of them were written by its quondam critic, are scholarly, thorough in scope and of potential value and interest to the inhabitant of the musical world. The discourse on Shakespeare and Music, for example, is the most comprehensive essay on the subject known to this reviewer. Unfamiliar material includes an investigation into the unhappy destinies of Schumann's children; an inquiry into some dedications which throws interesting light upon the character of the musicians concerned, and a valuable appreciation of Franz Kneisel, organizer of the Kneisel Quartet. More familiar

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topics are Folksongs in America; the Modernizing of Bach; Usurpations of the Ballet; Saint-Saëns; Jenny Lind and Barnum; Adelina Patti; Henry Edward Krehbiel and Theodore Thomas.

Fiction

POOR WOMEN! *by Norah Hoult* (HARPERS. $2.50)

THE portraits of these women have considerable vividness, such as a man could not have secured and such as only a few Englishwomen have equalled or surpassed in their journals. Miss Hoult observes like a naturalist, writes plain but adequate prose, and characterizes or caricatures her people frankly and passionately.

Upon this group of character studies she has, however, tried to impose an unconvincing general idea. What the idea is may be inferred from the title of the book, *poor* meaning, first, *without money,* and from the author's emphasis, in a note on the jacket, upon the tragic effects of the economic dependence of women. But the principal trouble with the seven women portrayed is not their financial circumstances, but their character—a different thing. Money and kindness would not make them much less unfortunate; from Ethel, who was not born charming enough to be selfish pleasantly, to Bridget Kiernan, who is irremediably stupid. They are the kind of people, women and men, who want something for nothing or much for little.

The portrayal of these characters is good enough to arouse the reader's concern. But the imposed explanations are rather disconcerting. They involve the author's plan, the several portraits, the total effect of the book, in a doubtful generalization. The book does not show a clear intention or the fulfilment of one.

THE DISINHERITED *by Milton Waldman* (LONGMANS, GREEN. $2.00).

MR. WALDMAN has devoted a thesis novel to the story of the perfectly assimilated Jew who finds that the road to himself lies through a return to his essential Jewishness. The discovery is tantamount to a rebellion against the well-fortified life he has built for himself and foreshadows the break-up of his amalgamated Jewish-Gentile world into its component parts. Mr. Waldman has written with great sincerity and an understanding of all the implications of the situation which confronts his hero.

GARDA *by Rose O'Neill* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

AN ARTIST'S book if ever there was one, *Garda* is written with a soul-satisfying extravagance. Few of us have the time—to say nothing of the capacity—to desire, enjoy, renounce, love and hate with the intensity and whole-heartedness of Miss O'Neill's characters: Garda and her twin brother, Narcissus; Bastiano, Garda's desperate, unhappy Italian husband; Starke, the conscience-haunted New Englander whom Garda wants with a simplicity that takes no account of conventions and complications. So much the more reason to be grateful to Miss O'Neill for making us believe that body and soul may be so divided between twins that neither is quite whole without the other, and for making us take ecstasy and torment into account again.

There is a little sketch book bound inside the first leaves of this book, where one may see how the bright Garda looked, and grim Starke, and all the others who come and go in the pages. If it were only for that little surprising—and yet so typical—gift of an abounding generosity, Miss O'Neill's book would stand out in any season.

SHEILA BOTH-WAYS *by Joanna Cannan* (STOKES. $2.50)

THE heroine of Miss Cannan's novel was the daughter of a brilliant, irresponsible father. For husband she chose a man who was solid and reliable. After the first excitement, the very real excitement of finding herself adequately cared for, cherished inarticulately, assured of safety for her children, Sheila wanted the romance that her father had never denied himself. It came, not quite undiluted, in the form of a soldier-friend of her husband. Sheila had her choice and chose responsibility.

The problem of Miss Cannan's book is so common that it is no exaggeration to call it universal; she has made her heroine choose what the majority of adults have, at some time or other, chosen. Yet her book has warmth and gaiety, shrewdness, humor and, in one episode, real tragedy. She does not cheat by over-emphasizing bitterness or resignation, and Sheila is left facing no dull and joyless future.

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THE DEVIL BEATS HIS WIFE *by Ben Wasson* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

Two movements of this novel are parallel: the consequences of a Southern lady's yielding to a Yankee; and the final passing of an old order. The story of the consequences is told largely by implication and quite gracefully. Most of its force comes from the way in which the disintegration of Narcisse and Aunt Ann repeats, in miniature, the decay of a lost aristocracy. The symbol remains slight but charming.

Diagonally across the two movements cuts a more powerful one, the descent of the Mississippi river. With this subject, particularly in the prologue and the last part of the book, Mr. Wasson writes at his best. In *Black Laughter* the passage on the Mississippi is a lively impression. But the prologue to *The Devil Beats His Wife* recalls very subtly and continually the ripple and flow of the great river as it swings past the levee toward the sea.

THE PRINCE SERVES HIS PURPOSE *by Alice Duer Miller* (DODD, MEAD. $2.00)

ALICE DUER MILLER, of the liberally flowing pen and plot-filled inspiration, has published three long short-stories. The first, *The Prince Serves His Purpose,* is pleasantly familiar. It is a theme dear to our hearts since childhood. The girl who has never been much suddenly becomes a great deal by virtue of the attentions of visiting royalty. She also awakens the dormant (and desired) love of her guardian by means of the devoted, itinerant Prince. The end is happy. *Death and Professor Raikes* is rather more than its predecessor. The plot centers about a petulant but capable society beauty and a savagely anti-social archaeologist. Fate and the young lady's monetary donation to science send them both to excavate some ruins in South America. The chronicle of their adventures and their love-in-spite-of-themselves make up the tale. It, too, ends happily. *Miss La Marne in Person* is better than either of the others. (These stories are arranged in a progression—they grow, successively, more interesting.) Miss La Marne is a famous screen favorite who was once the wife of a librarian-poet. She comes to make a personal appearance in her home-town, the lure of that native village being her husband, for whom she feels a certain proprietary affection. She finds him in the absurd position of private poet to an unscrupulously vain society matron. Marna La Marne opens her husband's eyes vigorously. The end is neither happy nor unhappy—it is realistic. The book is undeniably agreeable.

STILLBORN *by Lillian Eichler* (APPLETON. $2.00)

THIS book is worth reading. It seems to be Miss Eichler's first and is, therefore, doubly unusual. The story is almost Russian in its insistence on tragedy. The characters are doomed; they submit silently to Destiny. The novel (and this is admirable) though unrelieved by humor, or even common human happiness, is free from sentimentality; it is logical, clear and forceful. Any criticism must be directed against the style; it borders on verbosity and dilutes itself with mannerisms. These are neither fatal nor irrevocable faults. The plot is simple: Martha Kinney married Sandor Vallon, a young French painter who migrated to New York in the 'nineties. She was twenty-seven, intolerant, passionate, religious. Sandor left her. Suddenly her Catholicism got the better of her. She felt she had married an infidel, conceived her child in sin. So Talmy, her son, was to be dedicated to God, as reparation for her crime. Talmy's struggle, his instincts against his upbringing, and the final tragedy of this boy's life warped by his mother's bigoted monomania fill the book. In the end, one feels as if a jealous God had chosen to destroy, wrathfully. One should read *Stillborn*. Title and style notwithstanding, it is a valuable piece of work.

DAY'S END *by H. E. Bates* (VIKING. $2.00)

THIS is a book of really distinguished stories, infused with a strong quality of the soil, a human sympathy and depth of understanding like that of the Russian school at its best. The opening story, which gives its title to the book, is long enough to be considered a novelette and is a little masterpiece in the Tolstoyan manner. And for other stories of Mr. Bates, like "The Birthday", and "The Baker's Wife" with its restrained passion, there can be nothing but admiration.

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OUTSIDERS *by Josephine Bentham* (HENKLE. $2.50)

THIS is Miss Bentham's second novel. It is remarkably able. The story is vividly interesting: two utterly dissimilar people are linked in holy wedlock and find it impossible to maintain that state. It is not, however, the usual gruelling, unlovely history of a misfit marriage, for Paul Royden was really a fine gentleman, tolerant and courteous and devoted, and Leslie Barrett Royden was an elfish person; her frequent and shocking excursions from the beaten path did not dim her charm. But life could not continue on a basis of fervent individualism, and neither Paul's forgiveness nor Leslie's genuine repentance kept the ménage going. Then Paul met Helen Lindsay, who seemed the ideal of untouched purity. Ultimately Leslie, a perfect sport, packed her bags and departed. Leslie's honesty and Paul's serious bewildered effort to understand her are carefully and sympathetically pictured. The minor characters, too, are clear and alive. Miss Bentham's style is racy, easy and interesting. The only trouble with the novel is that it appears indefinably "studied".

LOOSE LADIES *by Viña Delmar* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

MISS DELMAR'S short stories almost invariably follow the O. Henry cliché, but the eleven stories in this book are all surprisingly new and absorbing. Miss Delmar's prose is fresh—except when it is too fresh—and airy, and swift, admirably suited to the sort of thing that interests her.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE DUSK *by Kain O'Dare* (CENTURY. $2.00)

THE author of this novel, a habitual criminal, has spent most of his life in jail, during which time he discovered his ability to write. He has presented his career in its several phases, closing with the statement that he does not believe moral correction comes with punishment alone. Mr. O'Dare learned many things in jail, but never seemed to be able to refrain from poaching on other people's preserves.

A TINY SEED OF LOVE, AND OTHER STORIES *by Sarah Salt* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $2.00)

THIS book is a real find and the opening story is one of the most distinguished tales by a contemporary English writer. The publishers are to be congratulated in accepting a book of short stories of this calibre, the first offering of an unknown writer. Miss Salt ought not long to remain unknown. She has the intensity, the fearlessness and the understanding that make for distinction, and a fine grasp of the essentials of her medium.

THE STRANGE COMPANIONS *by John Cranstoun Nevill* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.50)

THREE generations of Randalls had owned and operated the great shipping line that bore their name, and the indomitable Charlotte Randall had once taken over the reins until there should be a male member of the family old enough to carry on. Little Hughie Randall was the fourth generation who would shoulder the burden of this tradition, but he had also in his blood a love of painting; and the book deals with the boy's development, the struggle between these two conflicting elements in his life, and his final choice. Though Hughie is often made to appear precocious beyond all reason, the story of himself and his family is a good novel.

TIDES *by Count Edouard Von Keyserling* (MACAULAY. $2.50)

COUNTESS DORALICE could not find happiness with her elderly husband, Count Köhne-Jasky; so forsaking her lovely chateau, she ran away with Hans Grill, a young painter. In a little North Sea fishing village tragedy stalks her. Keyserling has interpreted the reactions of this young girl with subtle art.

THE MAN IN THE WHITE SLICKER *by Leonard H. Nason* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

THE scene of action in this tale is laid in the Argonne Forest. The author, who has written several anecdotal war stories, amusing despite

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their background of horror, relates the activities of an American machine-gun crew in that famous battle. With bullets flying around them and facing almost certain death, they carry on their war-time routine most amusingly, and the ways in which they temper the surrounding grimness run from sandbagging an officer to directing a young civil war of their own.

Detective and Mystery

MR. BILLINGHAM, THE MARQUIS AND MADELON *by E. Phillips Oppenheim* (LITTLE, BROWN. $2.00)

THREE clever people, an American, the Marquis and his niece Madelon, from Paris, get together at Monte Carlo, and proceed to separate a few unsuspecting people from their money. A series of short, connected stories carries the narrative along pleasantly.

THE BACCARAT CLUB *by Jessie Louisa Rickard* (LIVERIGHT. $2.00)

A FASCINATING tale of the infamous Baccarat Club. Lady Felice Selwyn disappears after a large dinner party and is found in the hands of three unscrupulous members of this club only after months of searching all over England and France. The bizarre plot is ingeniously worked out and offers many entertaining thrills.

THE MURDER BOOK OF J. G. REEDER *by Edgar Wallace* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

FIVE cases are solved, and several murders prevented by a seemingly timid old gentleman who is in reality a figure of terror to the London underworld. J. G. Reeder is an easy-going but brilliant detective attached to the office of the Home Prosecutor, and works out his problems independently and satisfactorily enough for the most ardent of crime fiction readers.

BOWERY MURDER *by Willard K. Smith* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

THOMAS WOODWARD, Wall Street operator and gambler, is shot to death in the Bowery Bar. Someone was bound to "get" him sooner or later, but the police did not expect five confessions—neither did they expect to find the District Attorney involved. Watts Gordon, a young police reporter who is investigating Woodward's private life, is made the goat, for political reasons. Newspaper versions and police stories are cleverly woven together with the notes of another police reporter, who was on the "inside", making *Bowery Murder* one of the best *Crime Club* publications to date.

FROM DUSK TILL DAWN *by William Garrett* (APPLETON. $2.00)

ON the eve of returning to Boston after a commonplace summer abroad young Jack Winter finds romance and adventure in a London night club. He finds himself champion of a girl in distress, and the reader who follows him through his strange and hazardous undertaking will find himself far from disappointed.

THE MURDER OF A MYSTERY WRITER *by John Hawk* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

STUMPED for a new method of death, John Falcon, the famous mystery-story writer, asks his dinner guests for a thought, and strangling is proposed. That night, while he is typing out his story, he is strangled in his study. Whereupon all his guests put in several unpleasant days. Not until another innocent man is "done in" is the real perpetrator found. Plenty of action and excitement.

THE STUDIO MURDER MYSTERY *by A. C. and Carmen Edington* (REILLY & LEE. $2.00)

A NOVEL plot-within-a-plot. Dwight Hardell, leading heavy of Superior Films, is stabbed to death the night before the finishing of a masterpiece on Stage Six. Several people had threatened to kill him, and when three had confessed Chief Detective Smith smelled a rat. So he played along, giving the real murderer plenty of rope, to the inevitable conclusion. A good close-up of moving-picture people at work, as well as an original work-out.

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THE BOOK MART

The annual exodus of American book dealers has come, and notices in the London *Times Literary Supplement* and other literary journals of London announce that Mr. So-and-So of New York will be in London from Sometime to Some-Other-Time. Here they are visited by English dealers who find the American market thus brought to their doors and, often, by owners of fine old libraries, who are able to dispose of family possessions without publicity and at satisfactory prices. Probably more of this material than ever will find its way to our shores this season, for the high prices paid in New York last season have pointed to America as the great market for rare English books. Nevertheless, the London auction rooms appear to have had their full share of the material coming out, and the season was practically ended in June with the dispersal at Sotheby's of an extraordinary collection of books and manuscripts, among which were no less than three copies of the Second Folio of Shakespeare and one of the Fourth Folio. It was apparent that the prices at the Kern sale were not without their influence upon the London market, for the high quality of the material offered in the Sotheby sale was not alone enough to account for the high prices paid. American competition was in evidence and is an increasing factor in the London auctions.

Though the American dealers generally spend most of their time in London while abroad, a few ramble over the Continent, where incunabula and early printing flourish in greater profusion than in England. For men like Lathrop C. Harper of New York this is the Happy Hunting Ground. Incidentally, for Mrs. Harper (Mabel Herbert Urner) it is also a Happy Hunting Ground in which to find additions to her collection of samplers (the finest private collection in the world), her collection of laces, her collection of amber, her collection of reliquaries, her collection of embroideries and all her other collections.

Gabriel Wells, the New York dealer, seems to have decided to make London, rather than New York, his personal headquarters. He has been spending more time there than on this side of the water lately and has a host of friends among the literary men of Britain. Last May, at the anniversary dinner of the Royal Literary Fund at the Hotel Victoria in London, Mr. Wells was a guest. John Galsworthy presided and offered the original manuscript of *Loyalties* to be auctioned off as a contribution to the Fund. "G. W." bought it for the tidy sum of thirty-three hundred pounds ($16,500). This comes pretty near the high price for a manuscript by a living author. Dr. Rosenbach of New York and Philadelphia, who is equally at home in London and Paris, has been so busy getting into his new quarters in New York, at 15 East Fifty-first Street, that he had to forego his usual spring flight across the pond. The new Rosenbach Galleries, removed from 273 Madison avenue, are the last word in bookstores. Everything has been carried out according to the ideas of Dr. Rosenbach himself, and the result has been a transformation of the old house once occupied by Bertram C. Work into a modern bookshop which is unique and, among bookmen, one of the show places of New York.

Yale University's library has been enriched in a department where it was not particularly strong before by the gift from Francis P. Garvan, a Yale man and Assistant Attorney-General under President Wilson, of the sporting library of the late Charles Sheldon, Yale '90. Mr. Sheldon retired from business in 1903 and from then on, till his death in 1928, gave up his entire time to travelling through the wilds and hunting big game. His library, according to Librarian Keogh of Yale, is one

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of the best of its kind in the country. Most of the books are in English, and about two-fifths of them deal with the United States, Canada and Mexico, special collections dealing with the British Colonies and dependencies. About eight hundred volumes deal with hunting in England, and there are a few early manuscripts, including one dated 1580 treating of the laws of the forest and game.

Efforts are being made to keep in this country the famous Vollbehr Collection of incunabula, which was brought to this country by Dr. Otto H. F. Vollbehr of Berlin some three years ago and exhibited at the National Arts Club in New York. Until two years ago it lacked the cornerstone of an incunabula collection, the Gutenberg Bible, but a perfect copy of this was secured in 1927 at the reputed price of $300,000, and this is now included in the collection. Dr. Vollbehr, who returned to Berlin last spring, left the collection here in the hope that the Congressional Library might secure it for $2,000,000, which is about half the price at which it has been valued.

The amazing prices paid for books on old furniture was one of the features of the late auction season in New York. The Reifsnyder collection, sold at the American Art Galleries, was the finest lot of books of its kind ever offered at auction, and for all the rarer items new records were made. The first edition of Thomas Chippendale's *Gentleman and Cabinet Makers Director*, London, 1754, brought $800; Heppelwhite's *Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, 1788, fetched $625; Sheraton's *Cabinet Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book*, 1791, went for $625 and his *Cabinet Dictionary*, 1803, brought $900.

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NOTES ON NEW BOOKS—(*continued*)

Adventure

THEY WERE SO YOUNG *by Achmed Abdullah* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $2.00)

THREE charming modern musketeers, a young Scottish Sultana, a usurper to be ousted; Paris, the Orient and the Khybar Pass; intrigue and dare-deviltry and romance. Mr. Abdullah puts all these into his book and makes a most beguiling story. Nothing startlingly new about the ingredients, no unforeseen events to take the breath away, but Achmed Abdullah has one gift which most writers of adventure stories either lack or suppress: when he says that one of his characters is in love his reader does not sigh or smile or skip the passage; he believes it. That belief works a miracle. There is suddenly a motive for all this courage and madness and flying about on two continents, and Mr. Abdullah's adventure story comes to life.

HER SERENE HIGHNESS *by Collin Brooks* (SEARS. $2.00)

ANOTHER of those mythical Balkan countries that are always the pawns in the game of European politics is the center of an unbelievably tangled and complicated conspiracy. Never have so many different factions, claimants and motives been crowded into one tale as in this story of a post-war attempt to re-establish a monarchy in Matvia. A lovely Princess and her stalwart English general escape from this hot-bed of diplomacy and intrigue to more normal surroundings.

THE BROKEN MARRIAGE *by Sinclair Murray* (DUTTON. $2.00)

WITH the usual ingredients—the lost treasure, the beautiful but cold English girl, the disillusioned and cynical African explorer, the "marriage-in-name-only" and the awakening under burning desert skies—Mr. Murray has fashioned a story of mystery and passion.

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Mr. Rascoe's experience is as long and varied as his performance has been brilliant. His first literary fame was achieved as Book Editor of the *Chicago Tribune,* where he laid about so lustily that he attracted the attention of the entire country and, more than any other person, founded the Chicago "school" of modern writers, which produced men now famous in the annals of American literature.

He left Chicago to become Associate Editor of *McCall's Magazine* in New York, and then was Literary Editor of the *New York Tribune* and came into contact with all American writers of any importance and most of the foreign authors of stature.

Mr. Rascoe syndicated a daily column under his name through the Central Press Association to 400 newspapers. He was also editor of the *Bookman,* and is a member of the board of judges of the Literary Guild, and Literary Editor of *Arts and Decorations.*

The policy of PLAIN TALK will in no way be affected, as the acquisition of Mr. Rascoe is an attempt to increase the excellence of our standards without any idea of changing our creed. While he will not be responsible for the entire editorial contents of PLAIN TALK, he will be very actively engaged in the presenting and selecting of material, and we believe his influence will be reflected actively in the magazine beginning with the August issue.

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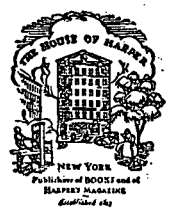

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